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George Akropolites
The History

Translated with an Introduction and Commentary by
RUTH MACRIDES



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George Akropolites
The History

Introduction, translation and commentary

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To my mother
and to the memory of my father,
the generation of 1922–1923

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Preface

George Akropolites' *History*, the main Greek source for 1204–1261, the years in 'exile', narrates the fragmentation of the Byzantine world after 1204, providing historians with the sequence of events and influencing modern perceptions of the period. Akropolites' thirteenth century has become our thirteenth century. Traditionally judged to be a reliable and objective eyewitness account by a writer who emphasizes the importance of impartiality in his preface, the *History* is indispensable. At the same time it is clear to all that Akropolites wrote while in office in the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, producing a picture of an ideal ruler.

This study of the author and his work shows the extent to which Akropolites' alignment with the usurper to the throne permeates and affects the *History* as a whole, its structure, its language and style, and the author's characterizations and views on historical causation and divine providence. In the *History* Akropolites speaks not only as a high official under Michael VIII. He speaks as a member of one of the noble families who had suffered under the Laskarides and who were restored by Michael Palaiologos. He expresses a superiority to, and disdain for, others who were, like him, friends and favourites of Theodore II, promoted and made noble by that emperor through marriage alliances. It was from John III and Theodore II that Akropolites received the education, the positions at court and the marriage that made him a relation of Michael Palaiologos and that ensured his survival in the change of dynasty. It was from John III and Theodore II that Akropolites had to dissociate himself in writing a *History* under Michael VIII. This *History* presents the case for the defence of Michael VIII but also for George Akropolites.

Acknowledgements

This study of George Akropolites' *History* has, like the brothers of Theodore I Laskaris, 'seen cities and learned minds'; starting in London, continuing on to Athens, Washington, D. C., Frankfurt, St Andrews, and Birmingham. Colleagues in all those cities have contributed to this work. It is my pleasure to thank them and also to recall the contributions of those who are no longer alive: Donald Nicol, with his interest in late Byzantium; Robert Browning, with his love of the Greek language; and Nikos Oikonomides, for his Byzantine wisdom. Dumbarton Oaks gave me an exquisite home and a great library. Irene Vaslef was unflagging in fulfilling my every bibliographical wish. 'Thank you' is little to say to my students and colleagues in the department of Mediaeval History, St Andrews, where I first taught, and learned to be a mediaevalist. Bryer's symposia gave me generous and ample opportunities for excursions into Megas Komnenos, Palaiologan sainthood, spiritual kinship, and many other subjects which have contributed to this study. Günter Prinzing and Joseph Munitiz have shared with me their best knowledge of Chomatenos and Blemmydes. Michael Angold has encouraged me and given valuable support from the beginning. Henry Buglass, the graphic artist at the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham, drew the maps. They all urged me to finish. But, finally and most of all, I took the advice of Paul Magdalino, whom I have known almost as long as George Akropolites.

Note on Transliteration and Citation

I have transliterated Greek names and terms as closely as possible. Common Christian names and well-known place names are given in the form most familiar to English readers. Greek η is rendered as 'e', β as 'b' for Byzantine names, except where the Latin or Slavic origin of the name makes 'v' more appropriate.

All works cited in the Introduction and Translation and Commentary more than once are given in abbreviated form by author and short title and listed in full in the bibliography at the end.

Note on the Translation and Commentary

The translation is based on the text of the *History* established by Heisenberg in his 1903 Teubner edition. I have taken into consideration the proposed emendations published by Wirth in his 1978 reprint of Heisenberg's edition. My translation is intended to be as close to the Greek as possible, providing a sense of Akropolites' sentence structure, and reproducing his style. Akropolites was not an elegant writer of Greek. His *History* betrays signs of haste and lack of revision. His long paratactic sentences give a disjointed quality to his prose. He writes a spare Greek, concise and lacking in adornment, although his prose becomes more elaborate and flows when he is particularly interested or involved in a subject. In my translation I have tried to render these changes in his style, avoiding paraphrases and, above all, declining to perfect his work. The angular and awkward nature of his unedited text is imitated in the English translation. Of the three recent translations in German and modern Greek,[1] mine attempts to remain closest to his Greek.

Section divisions created by Heisenberg have been retained, although I have introduced a greater number of paragraph divisions. References to the commentary are by section number, followed by note number, e.g. §7.6. The notes

[1] A Russian translation came to my attention too late to be taken into consideration. For the translations, see the Bibliography. For reviews of the German translation by W. Blum, *Georgios Akropolites (1217–1282), Die Chronik*, see G. Prinzing in *Orthodoxes Forum* 7 (1993), 121–5; D. R. Reinsch in *BZ* 86–7 (1993–4), 121–8; R. Macrides in *BSl* 53 (1992), 275–7.

in each section are preceded by a general discussion (in italic type), summarizing the content of the section, and reviewing problems of dating and other key issues. The commentary aims to clarify the text, to discuss problems of interpretation and dating, giving relevant primary sources and the secondary works which engage directly with the problems raised by the text. The literature cited in the commentary is not exhaustive.

Note on the Studies

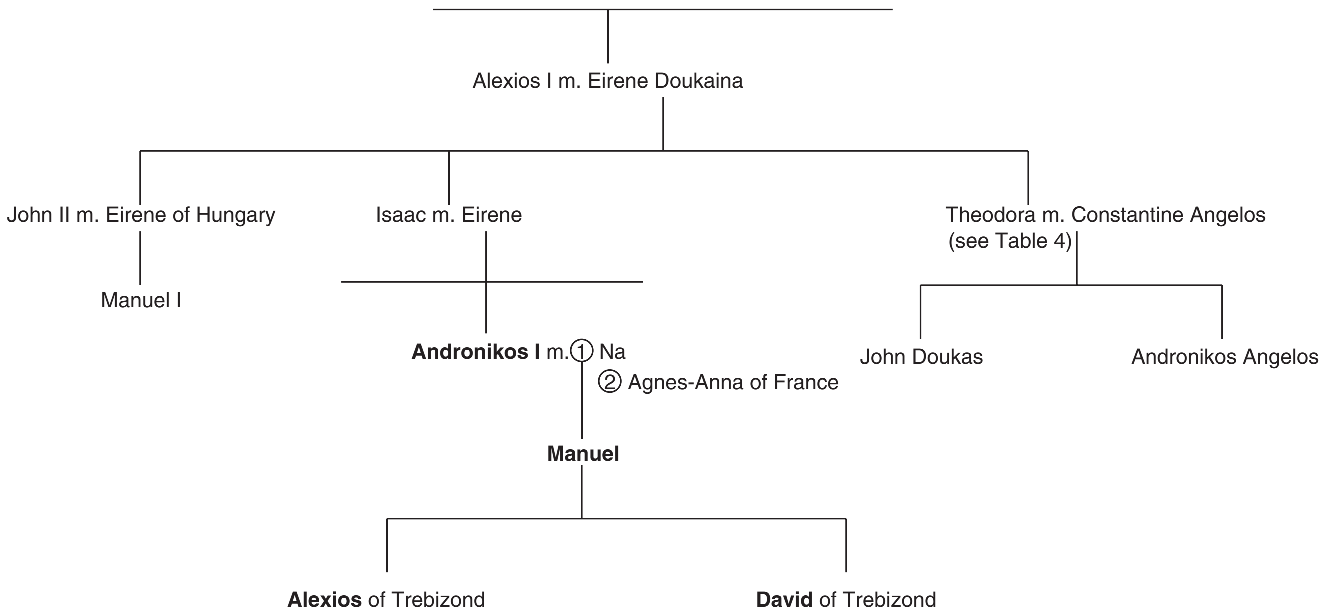
The studies bring together under specific headings passages which are scattered in the *History*. They are intended as an overview of Akropolites' presentation of each subject, with discussion of secondary literature in cases where misunderstandings of the text have occurred.

Abbreviations

Additamenta	*Theodori Scutariotae Additamenta ad Georgii Acropolitae Historiam*, in A. Heisenberg, ed., *Opera* I, 277–302
Akrop.	*Georgii Acropolitae Opera* I, A. Heisenberg, ed., corr. P. Wirth
Blem.	Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Autobiographia*, ed. J. A. Munitiz
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
ByzForsch	*Byzantinische Forschungen*
BB	*Byzantinobulgarica*
B	*Byzantion*
BMGS	*Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BNJ	*Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher*
BZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
BSl	*Byzantinoslavica*
Chon.	Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J.-L. van Dieten
M. Chon.	Michael Choniates, *Τὰ Σωζόμενα*, ed. S. Lampros; *Epistulae*, ed. F. Kolovou
CIC	*Corpus Iuris Civilis*, ed. P. Krueger, T. Mommsen, T. Schoell, G. Kroll (Berlin, 1886–95), 3 vols
CPG	*Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*
Dölger-Wirth	*Regesten*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
EEBS	*Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*
EI	*Encyclopaedia of Islam*
EO	*Échos d'Orient*
ΕΦ	*Ἐκκλησιαστικός Φάρος*
Epistulae	*Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae CCXVII*, ed. N. Festa
FM	*Fontes Minores*
Greg.	Nikephoros Gregoras, *Historia*, ed. E. Schopen
Heis.	A. Heisenberg, ed., *Georgii Acropolitae Opera* I
IRAIK	*Izvestiia russkogo arkheologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole*
JÖB	(*JÖBG*=vols 1–17) *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik*
JGR	*Jus graecoromanum*

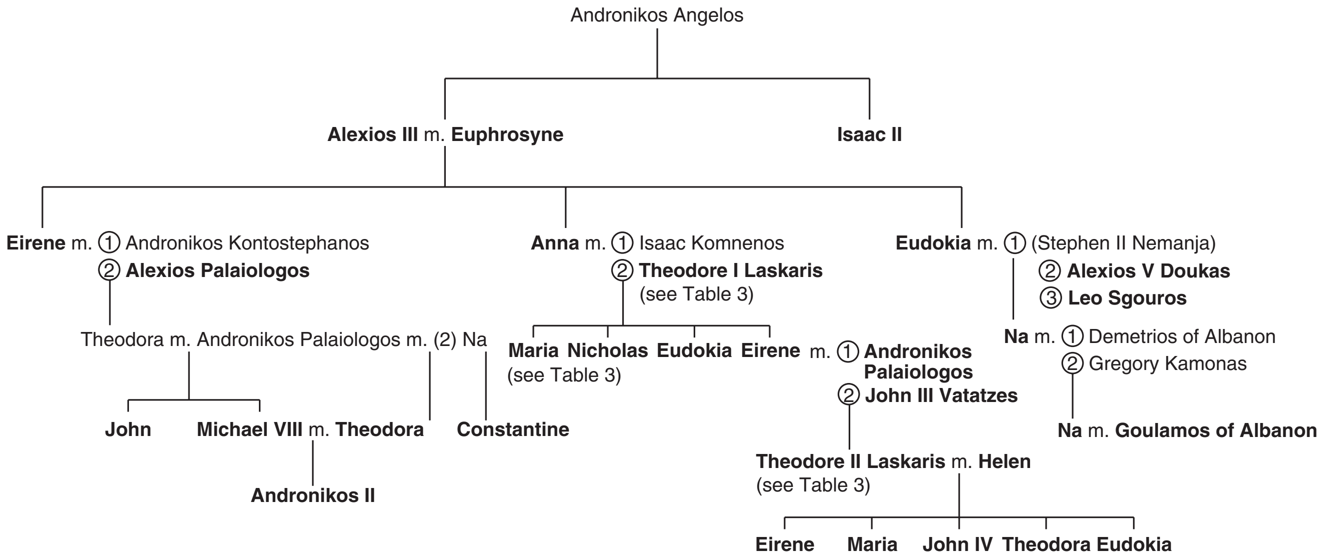
Kant.	Kantakouzenos, *Historia*, ed. L. Schopen
Kinn.	Kinnamos, *Epitome*, ed. A. Meineke
LThK	*Lexikon der Theologie und Kirche*
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores
MM	F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*
NéosHell	*Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων*, ed. S. Lampros
OCD	*The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1970)
OCP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
ODB	*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. Kazhdan
Opera II	*Georgii Acropolitae Opera* II, ed. A. Heisenberg
Pach.	George Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler
Partitio	*Partitio terrarum Imperii Romanie*, ed. A. Carile
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca, ed. J. P. Migne
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina, ed. J. P. Migne
PLP	*Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*
Ps.-Kod.	Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des offices*, ed. J. Verpeaux
RE	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft
REB	*Revue des études byzantines*
REG	*Revue des études grecques*
RESEE	*Revue des études sud-est européennes*
RHC	Recueil des historiens des Croisades
Rh-P	G. A. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*
RIS	Rerum Italicarum Scriptores
SBAN	*Spisanie na Bulgarskata Akademiia na Naukite*
Skout.	Theodore Skoutariotes in K. N. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη* 7
Skyl.	John Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. I. Thurn
TTh	T. L. F. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden*
TIB	Tabula imperii Byzantini
TM	*Travaux et Mémoires*
Vill.	Geoffrey de Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. Faral
VV	*Vizantiiskii Vremennik*
Wirth	P. Wirth, corr. to *Georgii Acropolitae Opera* I, ed. A. Heisenberg
Zon.	John Zonaras, *Annales*, I–II, ed. Pinder, III, ed. Büttner-Wobst
ZRVI	*Zbornik radova vizantoloskog instituta*

Table 1: The Komnenoi



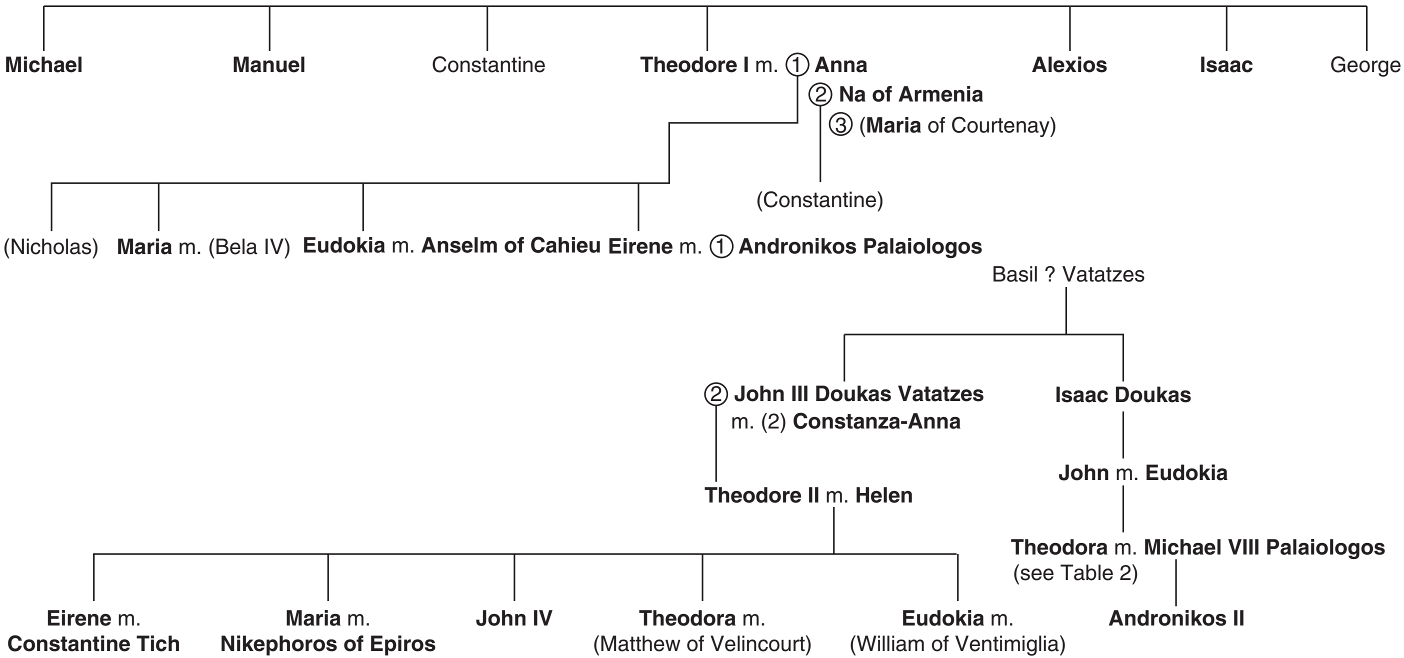
Names in **bold** are mentioned in Akropolites' *History.*

Table 2: The Descendants of Alexios III Angelos



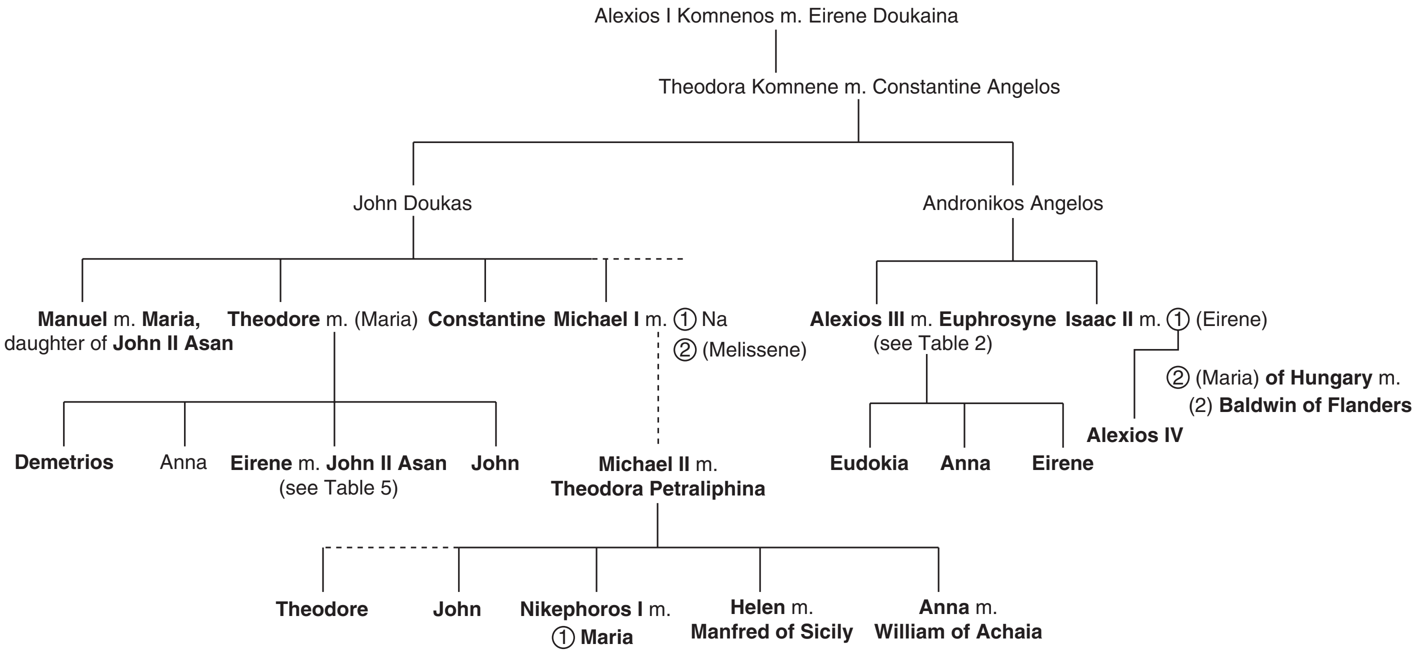
Names in **bold** are mentioned in Akropolites' *History*. When Akropolites refers to a person without a name, the name, when known from other sources, is supplied in brackets.

Table 3: The Laskaris Family



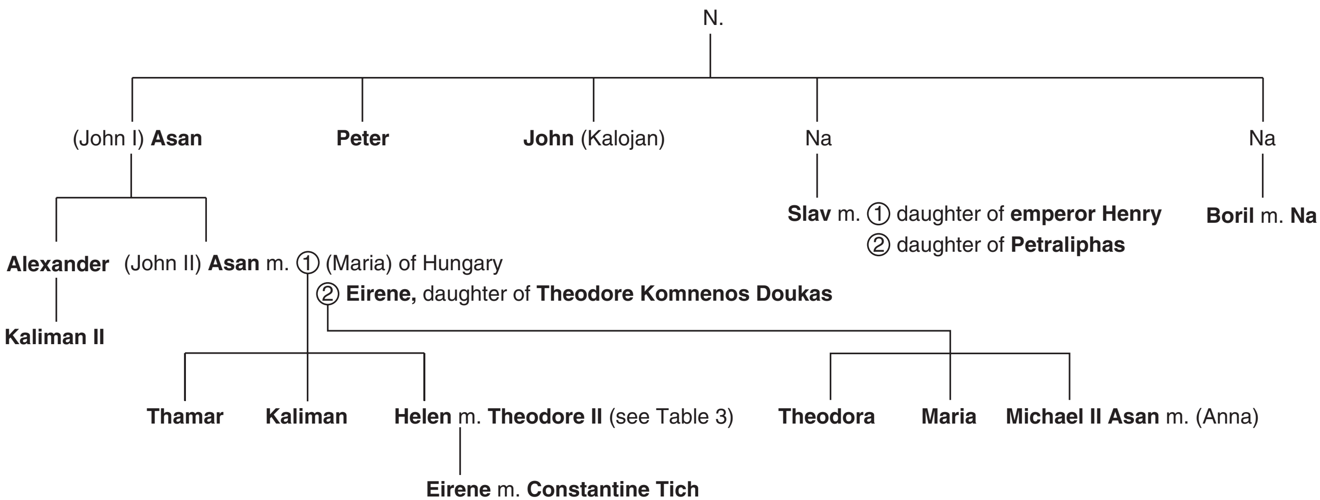
Names in **bold** are mentioned in Akropolites' *History*. When Akropolites refers to a person without a name, the name, when known from other sources, is supplied in brackets.

Table 4: The Komneno-Doukai of Epiros

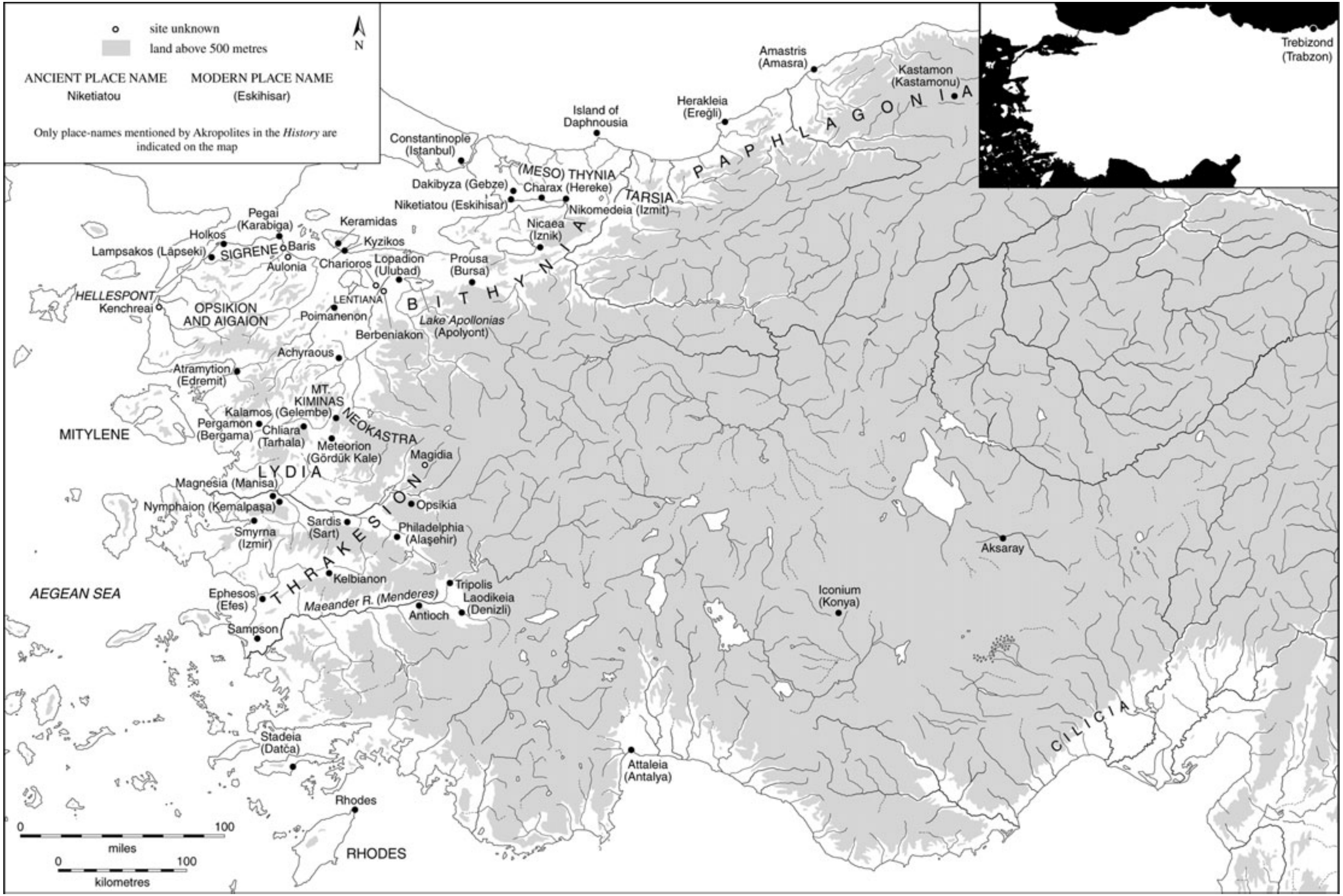


Names in **bold** are mentioned in Akropolites' *History*. When Akropolites refers to a person without a name, the name, when known from other sources, is supplied in brackets.

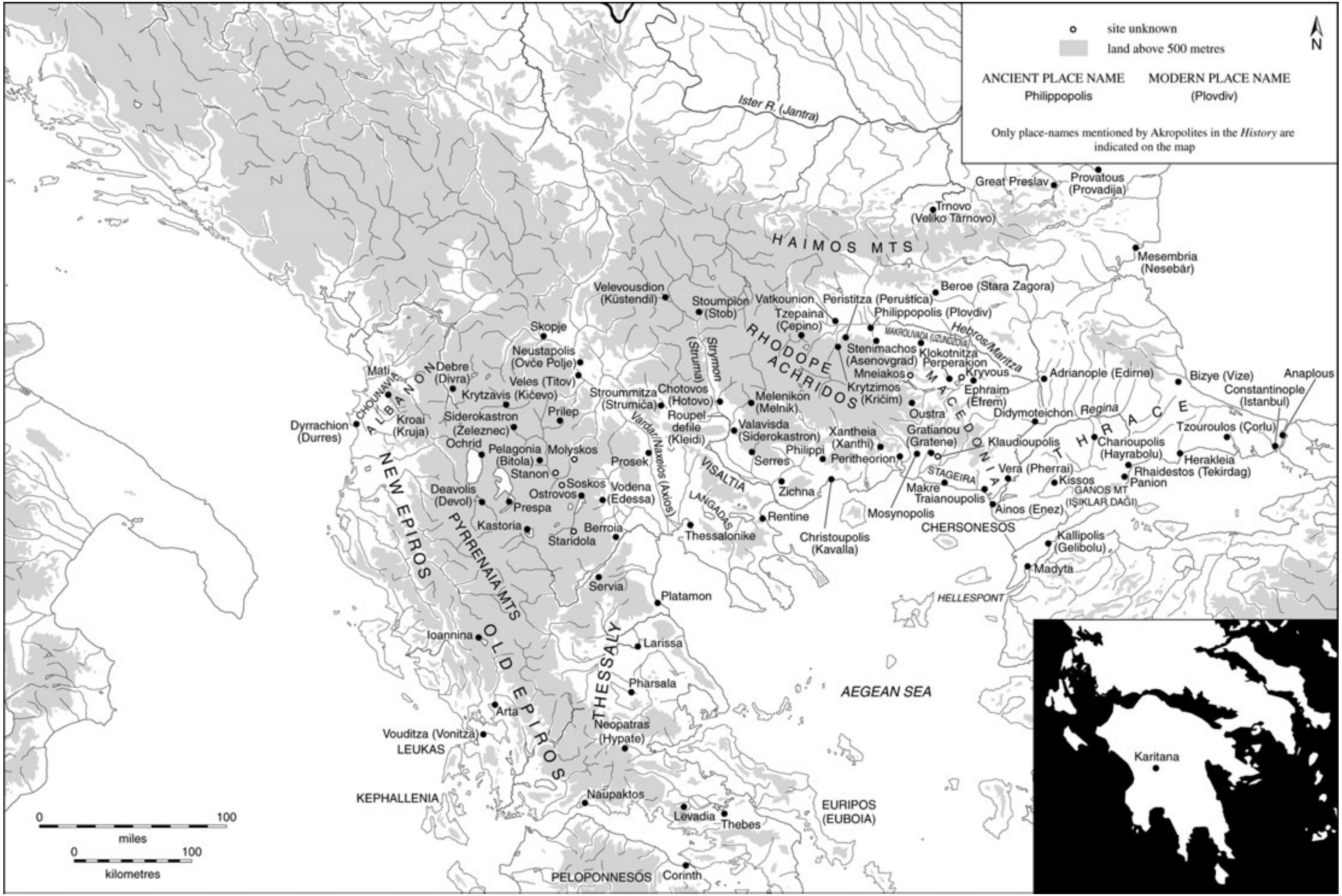
Table 5: The Family of Asan



Names in **bold** are mentioned in Akropolites' *History*. When Akropolites refers to a person without a name, the name, when known from other sources, is supplied in brackets.



Map 1: Asia Minor



Map 2: The Balkans

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Introduction

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Introduction

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY IN HISTORICAL WRITING

The thirteenth century has always been treated as separate and different—not to say, detachable—in Byzantine historiography as in Byzantine history.[1] One turns the page, one starts a new chapter. No one can deny that the Latin conquest of Constantinople, the 'cosmic cataclysm', as one contemporary called it,[2] brought enormous change to Byzantium, change which was in many ways irreversible. For more than half a century Constantinople was not the centre of the Byzantine world. The 'rich men' of the city, in Robert of Clari's words,[3] left the Queen of Cities and scattered, joining new centres which arose in Epiros and in Asia Minor. Unity was never again to be a characteristic of the empire. These structural changes were accompanied, it is said, by the growth of a sense of Hellenic identity and a weakening of Roman institutions, notably Roman law.[4] Apparently new practices were introduced, it is thought, as a result of Latin contact in the thirteenth century, the anointing of emperors, and trial by ordeal.[5] The Church became more dominant, beginning with the later thirteenth century, and ecclesiastical controversy, the Arsenite schism and the union of the Churches, had serious consequences for imperial authority.[6] All these changes contribute to a new look for Byzantium, a Byzantium which most practising English-speaking Byzantinists prefer to leave alone. This is the

[1] The following, 3–5, is adapted from the author's 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 63–5.

[2] Euthymios Tornikes, 'Monody on the *hypertimos* of Neopatras', ed. Darrouzès, 'Les discours d'Euthyme Tornikès (1200–1205)', §10.2–3, pp 82–3.

[3] Robert of Clari, §80, p. 80.32–4.

[4] Angold, 'Byzantium in exile', 551, 561, 562.

[5] For this view of imperial unction, see M. Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica Christianorum orientalium*, III (Paris, 1930), 151–3; Ostrogorsky, 'Zur Kaisersalbung und Schilderhebung im spätbyzantinischen Krönungszeremoniell', 246–56. For trial by ordeal as a Latin custom introduced after 1204, see Angold, 'The interaction of Latins and Byzantines during the period of the Latin Empire (1204–1261): the case of the ordeal', 1–10.

[6] Angold, *Church and society*, 530–63; Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period', 68, 82.

history of the Serbs, the Bulgarians, the Greeks, the Turks, the Venetians, the Genoese, the Franks. It is already 'Byzance après Byzance'.

However, the thirteenth century has been treated as a separate entity not so much because of any intrinsic quality or characteristic which makes it different from what preceded it, but because those who have studied it specialized in the later period at a time when the eleventh and twelfth centuries had been little studied. In the last 25 years, the twelfth century has been the focus of much attention and re-evaluation—political, cultural, and economic—and the greater familiarity with the twelfth century which this has engendered makes it easier to set the thirteenth century and its historians in a broader context. Now that we know more about the practice of law in the twelfth century,[7] it is harder to claim a weakening of Roman law in the thirteenth; now that we see how the Byzantines referred to themselves as Hellenes in the twelfth century,[8] we cannot pinpoint the origins of Hellenic nationalism in the thirteenth; and now that so much more has been said about writers of history of the eleventh and twelfth centuries,[9] we cannot study thirteenth-century historical writing in isolation.

What happened to history writing in the thirteenth century? Did it rise to the challenge of the unprecedented conditions which the Latin conquest of Constantinople produced? Was the fragmentation of the Byzantine world reflected in written accounts? The short entries on writers of history in handbooks of literature refer to some of the characteristics of writers but do not show how they related to each other and how they reacted to the events of their times.[10]

The thirteenth century presents a variety in historical writing familiar from earlier periods—two classicizing histories, by George Akropolites and George Pachymeres respectively, and one world chronicle written by Theodore Skoutariotes: three men who lived in Asia Minor in the so-called empire of Nicaea, during the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople, the period in 'exile', but who wrote in Constantinople after its reconquest in 1261.

[7] A. E. Laiou and D. Simon, *Law and society in Byzantium: ninth–twelfth centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984); Macrides, *Kinship and justice in Byzantium, 11th–15th centuries*, nos VI–XII.

[8] Magdalino, 'Hellenism and nationalism in Byzantium', 1–29.

[9] A. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Cambridge, 1984); J. Ljubarskij *et al.*, 'Quellenforschung and/or literary criticism: Narrative structures in Byzantine historical writings', *Symbolae Osloenses* 73 (1998), 5–73; I. Grigoriades, *Linguistic and literary studies in the* Epitome Historion *of John Zonaras* (Thessalonike, 1998); A. Kaldellis, *The argument of Psellos'* Chronographia (Leiden, 1999); T. Gouma-Peterson, ed., *Anna Komnene and her times* (New York and London, 2000); Macrides, 'History writing in the twelfth century', 120–39; Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 1–26, 393–5.

[10] Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur*, 286–90, 388–90; Hunger, *Literatur* I, 442–53, 477–8.

On Akropolites we are dependent for our knowledge of the years 1203–61, that is for the reigns of the emperors of Nicaea, Theodore I Laskaris, John III Vatatzes, Theodore II Laskaris, and the rise to power of Michael VIII Palaiologos. Skoutariotes' world chronicle ends with 1261, following Akropolites' account closely for 1204–61 but adding to it and subtracting from it in a decisive way.[11] Pachymeres, on the other hand, sets out to tell the story of the reigns of Michael Palaiologos and his son Andronikos.[12]

The *History* of George Akropolites, which begins and ends with events in Constantinople, is the only contemporary Greek narrative for 1203–61. The work overlaps with the histories of Niketas Choniates and George Pachymeres who deal in greater detail with the first and last three years covered by Akropolites. As is the case with most Byzantine historical narratives, but especially those of the middle and late Byzantine periods, so too Akropolites' *History* has been used by later historians to reconstruct the period it covers, but without the benefit of a study of its author. Akropolites' *History* provides the backbone of any modern account of the 'empire of Nicaea'. His is the only narrative of the whole period and it is therefore to him that we turn for our own accounts of what happened. Yet few questions have been asked of the writer. The story he tells is treated separately from who he was, as if it were possible to disengage the two. Indeed, in the case of Akropolites, who tells us so much about himself, such an approach to the *History* is difficult to defend.

THE MAN AND HIS WORK

George Akropolites made an account of his life an integral part of his *History*. The *History* is, in fact, the major source for his life. He talks about himself through first-person interjections and also by reporting statements addressed to him and relating conversations in which he took part. He introduces himself into the *History* at chronologically correct times. Akropolites divulges the age he was at specific times and the work in which he was engaged. Any attempt, therefore, to understand the *History*, but also to gain knowledge of the man, has to take into consideration the author's presentation of himself in his historical narrative.

[11] For the additions and changes to Akropolites' text, see Heisenberg, *Opera* I, 277–302 (=*Additamenta*). For the identification of the author of the *Synopsis chronike* with Theodore Skoutariotes and a discussion of his work, see below, 65–71.

[12] Hunger, *Literatur* I, 447–53; Failler, 'Chronologie', I, 5–8; *ODB* III, 1550. On Pach.'s account of Michael Palaiologos, see below, 72–5.

The man who was to write the main account of the 'empire of Nicaea' spent the first 16 and the last 21 years of his life (1217–82)[13] in Constantinople, thus living more than half of his 65 years in the capital. Before 1204 Constantinopolitan origins were highly regarded;[14] after 1204 this continued to be the case. Theodore II, in an encomium for his teacher George, addressed him as 'noble [εὐγενής] from the virtues of your parents and even more on account of your birthplace [πατρίς] . . . the city of Constantine, the queen but now slave'.[15] The significance which birth in Constantinople had for those living in the empire of Nicaea can be surmised from the patriarch Germanos II's (1223–40) description of certain detractors:

> What do they say? That our patriarch is not one of the
> well born, nor can those who bore and nurtured him
> boast of being natives and sucklings of the Queen of
> Cities. What are you talking about? Are we worthless
> for this reason and are they worthy and well
> born who terminated their mothers' pains in that city?[16]

The Akropolites family association with Constantinople can be traced back to the late tenth century. The earliest reference to the name derives from the capital; the *Patria* mentions the house of an Akropolites.[17] This house was at the centre of the city, on the Mese, to the west of the Forum of Constantine.[18] However, the etymology of the surname, 'inhabitant of the acropolis', indicates an association with another part of the city.[19]

Equally significant for the *History* is the status of the Akropolites family. In a speech which Akropolites puts in the mouth of the emperor John III, George is said to come from an 'illustrious family'.[20] Although the prosopography of the Akropolites family before the thirteenth century has not been written, lead

[13] The date of his birth is calculated from a reference to his age in the *History*. See §39.10 and Heis., 'Prolegomena', in *Opera* II, iv, n. 2. His date of death can be ascertained from Pach.: Michael VIII died in December 1282 (II, 667.7–16), having appointed Theodore Mouzalon *megas logothetes* upon Akrop.'s death (III, 19.18–19).

[14] Magdalino, 'Byzantine snobbery', 58–78, here at 65.

[15] *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 101.134–7.

[16] Lagopates, *Γερμανός ὁ Β' Πατριάρχης*, 282–3, cited and translated by Magdalino, 'Byzantine snobbery', 65.

[17] T. Preger, ed., *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum* II (Leipzig, 1907, repr. 1989), §71, 150.1–2. S. Lampros, '*Ἀκροπολίτης, ὄνομα παραγνωρισθέν*', *NéosHell.* 2 (1905), 159, was the first to recognize a proper name in the *Patria* passage. For the date of the *Patria*, see Berger, *Untersuchungen zu den Patria Konstantinupoleos*, 187–96, esp. 192.

[18] For this location see P. Magdalino, *Constantinople médiévale* (Paris, 1996), 43 and n. 151; also P. Magdalino, 'Aristocratic *OIKOI* in the tenth and eleventh regions of Constantinople', in N. Necipoğlu, ed., *Byzantine Constantinople* (Leiden, 2001), 66–7.

[19] H. Moritz, *Die Zunamen bei den byzantinischen Historikern und Chronisten* II (Landshut, 1898), 36.

[20] §32.3 (Heis. 49.19): *περιφανές*.

seals and references in documents and in other written sources give an indication of the family's standing. This evidence produces a list of Akropolitai from the early eleventh century and into the twelfth, all of whom were in the civil administration, in fiscal and judicial capacities.[21]

A fiscal position in Latin-held Constantinople has also been suggested for George's father.[22] Akropolites refers to his parents, without naming them, and gives an indication of his father's situation. He was directly involved with the Latins in some capacity, for George states that his father was 'very much in their grip, held by the profusion of expenses and also his and their liberalities . . .'. He wanted to 'slip away secretly' from the Latins but an additional impediment to his leaving Constantinople was the 'large staff' he had. Whether this was a staff of household servants in his father's employ—the source of his expenses—or his staff as a functionary in the Latin administration, George's account of his father suggests a man of importance, with obligations. It does not, however, provide a clear picture of his function.[23]

It would thus appear that the Akropolitai were a family of Constantinopolitan civil functionaries. To describe them as 'noble' and 'illustrious' is an 'exaggerated claim', as Alexander Kazhdan suggested.[24] However, we should note that as the emperor Theodore II himself said, Akropolites' 'nobility' derived more from his Constantinopolitan origin than from his parents: 'even more on account of your birthplace'. In George's case 'quality of *genos* was tied to prestige of *patris*'.[25] He was, however, to change the family fortune at Nicaea, under John III Vatatzes and Theodore II.

If Constantinopolitan origins gave George Akropolites prestige in the empire of Nicaea, his education there provided him with a means of further advancement. Like Michael Psellos, Akropolites is keen to convey, through his autobiographical insertions into his *History*, information about the stages of his education and its quality, as well as the standing it gave him in the eyes of emperors.

[21] The eleventh- and twelfth-century Akropolitai include two *chartoularioi tou stratiotikou* (*logothesiou*), a *megas chartoularios tou genikou logothesiou*, a *dikaiophylax*, a *kensor* and *parathalassites*. In the absence of a prosopography of the family, see Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, II, nos 345 and 353, 575, 577, 903, 1133; also A. P. Kazhdan and S. Ronchey, *L'aristocrazia bizantina dal principio dell'XI alla fine del XII secolo* (Palermo, 1997), 208, 262, 359.

[22] §29. See Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean 1204–1500*, 48. For examples of Greeks who served the Latin emperors in the administration, see Chon. 643.3–10; Lock, 'The Latin emperors as heirs to Byzantium', 295–304, here at 300 and n. 22.

[23] See §29.3. A lead seal of a George Akropolites from the late twelfth century has been found in Argos. See A. Oikonomou-Laniado, 'Un sceau de Georges Akropolite trouvé à Argos', *REB* 55 (1997), 291–4. While the context of the find makes the date of the seal too early to be that of the author of the *History*, the seal could belong to the author's father, or more likely, grandfather. The seal does not bear a title in its legend.

[24] *ODB* I, 48–9, s.v. 'Akropolites'; Kazhdan and Ronchey, 104 (see n 21 above).

[25] Magdalino, 'Byzantine snobbery', 65.

It was at the court of John III, at 17, that Akropolites began his higher education. He had just completed his secondary or grammar schooling in Constantinople, an education about which nothing is known, not even the language in which it was conducted.[26]

To relate the course of his education at 'Nicaea', Akropolites conveys a scene in which the emperor John commends to the young George the life of a 'philosopher'. He shows through this scene and the emperor's address to him that he was in a much closer relationship to the emperor than the other young men with whom he began his studies: 'These I have taken from Nicaea and handed over to the school but you I have sent forth from my household . . . Demonstrate, then, that you indeed go forth from my household, and engage in your studies accordingly'.[27] The speech which Akropolites puts in the emperor's mouth makes several central points about George. He was brought up at court in the emperor's household;[28] the emperor gave him the opportunity to excel as an educated man, for even though Akropolites was from an 'illustrious family', it was because of his education that he would be considered 'worthy of great honours and rewards'.

The writings of Nikephoros Blemmydes, George Akropolites, and Gregory of Cyprus provide information about education in the empire of Nicaea. They indicate that there were several teachers who made their expertise available. They give the names of teachers and the subjects they taught, showing that students moved from teacher to teacher. Absent from their accounts is any sense of a structure, of teachers attached to places of instruction. Blemmydes names a number of men to whom he went in pursuit of secondary and higher education.[29] He does not say whether his teachers were giving private instruction or were paid by the emperor. Only one, Karykes, held a title, *hypatos ton philosophon*, which may have had a connection with his teaching, as it had in the twelfth century.[30]

Akropolites' description of his higher education shows that it was imperially sponsored and directed. He relates how the emperor sent a group of

[26] Gregory of Cyprus found secondary education ('grammar') at Nicosia to be in Latin: ed. Lameere, 179.2–6. It is possible that Akropolites was chosen to go on an embassy to Constantinople (below, 10, 11) and to head the delegation to Lyons (below, 14, 16) because of a knowledge of Latin. See, also, below, 38–9, 52, for the suggestion that he had knowledge of Latin documents and, in one case, gave a paraphrase of one in his narrative.

[27] §32.

[28] See also below, 18–19 and n. 105.

[29] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §2–10, §24; II, §7–8: Monasteriotes for 'grammar' education, Prodromos for mathematics, Karykes for logic. See also Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 14–15; Gregory of Cyprus, ed. Lameere, 183–5.

[30] Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 326–7; cf. M. Loukaki, 'Remarques sur le corps de douze didascales au XII^{e} siècle', *ΕΥΨΥΧΙΑ. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler* (Paris, 1998), 427–38.

young men to the teachers, Theodore Hexapterygos and Nikephoros Blemmydes, paying their salaries.[31] The number of students—five—who began their higher education at the same time is repeated several times in different sources, giving the impression that this was the first imperially sponsored group in the empire.[32]

Akropolites derived great pride and, no doubt, prestige from having studied philosophy with Nikephoros Blemmydes, 'whom we all knew to be more accomplished than others at that time in the philosophical sciences'.[33] He demonstrates the importance for him of his studies with Blemmydes by his numerous mentions of his teacher, both in the *History* and elsewhere.[34] In the *History* also there is evidence of Blemmydes' influence on Akropolites. He acknowledges his teacher as a source of his information about the solar eclipse in 1239, and Akropolites' accuracy in transmitting his teacher's lesson can be checked in Blemmydes' textbook.[35] But Blemmydes affected Akropolites beyond the knowledge of the subjects he imparted. Other debts remain unacknowledged although more significant. These have to do with Akropolites' language, interests and attitudes.[36]

From the time of his studies under Blemmydes[37] until 1246, when Akropolites accompanied the emperor John on his three-month campaign in the 'west',[38] nothing certain is known about Akropolites' life. However, both the *History* and the writings of Theodore II make references to a period of time in which George taught Theodore logic and philosophy.[39] The teacher–student relationship is further documented by Theodore's 39 letters to Akropolites which Akropolites collected,[40] presenting them to Theodore with a verse

[31] Akrop. §32; Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §49.

[32] §32.2.

[33] §32.

[34] §32, §39, §53, §87; Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 70.24–71.4.

[35] §39.7.

[36] Below 46–51, for a discussion of this influence.

[37] Akrop. tells us when they began (1238/9: see §39.6; Heis. 63.5–6) but not how long they lasted.

[38] §43–§46.

[39] Akrop. §63.16. On Theodore's interest in learning and his collecting of books, see Skout. 535.20–536.6. See Theodore II's 'Encomium for Akropolites', *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 96–108; for his letters, see below, n. 40.

[40] Forty-one letters were published by Festa, *Epistulae*, 67–116 and one by Tartaglia, *Opuscula*, 2–22; see Markopoulos, '*Θεοδώρου Β' Λασκάρεως ἀνέκδοτον ἐγκώμιον πρὸς τὸν Γεώργιον Ἀκροπολίτην*', 104–18, here at 106 n. 9. Of these 42 letters, however, three (nos 39–41: *Epistulae*, 113–16) were written, according to the lemma, after he had become sole emperor. These letters would not, therefore, have been part of the collection Akrop. made. See Heisenberg's review of Festa's edition, *BZ* 9 (1900), 211–22, here 213–14. For references to the subjects Akrop. taught Theodore, see *Epistulae*, 91.7–9; 95.14–15; 113–16; Encomium for Akropolites, ed. Tartaglia, *Opuscula*, 105–7. Theodore refers also to other students of Akrop.: *Epistulae*, 75.89–91; 93.17–19.

preface,[41] and the encomium for Akropolites which Theodore composed in response.[42]

Heisenberg, presuming that the letters would have had to have been written when the two men were separated by a large distance and, taking 1246 as the first time Akropolites travelled with the emperor John outside of Anatolia, suggested 1246 as the starting point of the period of instruction. He considered 1252, the date of Akropolites' next journey to the west, to mark the end of the teaching and also the time when the letters were collected.[43]

The above chronology is, however, based on a series of assumptions. First, although Akropolites relates in his *History* two occasions on which he crossed the Hellespont, in 1246 and 1252,[44] those letters which make clear reference to separation could all have been written during one and the same separation.[45] Furthermore, Akropolites does not mention all his travels in his *History.* A letter of Theodore clearly recounts an otherwise unknown and therefore undatable journey made by Akropolites to Constantinople.[46] Likewise, although many of the letters were written when the Hellespont separated the two men, others could have been written when they were both in the same town, or in different parts, of Anatolia.[47]

Therefore, the length of time over which the letters were written cannot be ascertained. Although Theodore refers in his encomium of his teacher to the passing of time during his studies, he does so in an imprecise way.[48] If some of the letters can be ascribed with relative certainty to the three months when Akropolites was with John III in Serres and Thessalonike in 1246,[49] others cannot be dated at all. Additional difficulties in fixing the time of instruction derive not from the letters but from uncertainties relating to the period when Blemmydes taught Theodore[50] and the date when Akropolites finished his own education under Blemmydes.[51] Given so many insoluble problems, the

[41] *Opera* II, 7–9. It is clear from these verses that they were written before Theodore was sole emperor. Akropolites refers to Theodore as 'emperor, son of the famous king John' (8.19–20).

[42] *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 96–108, esp. 105.225.

[43] Heisenberg, *BZ* 9 (1900), 216; Heisenberg, *Opera* II, vii–viii. Heisenberg's dating was followed also by Markopoulos, n. 40 above, 106–7. The new editor of the 'encomium', Tartaglia, *Opuscula*, 95, likewise adopts this chronology.

[44] §43, §49.

[45] *Epistulae*, 87.10; 88.29–31; 89.1–2; 92.23–5; 92–3.

[46] *Epistulae*, 109.5–9. See below, n. 58.

[47] E.g., no. 18,94–5; no. 31,106–7; no. 33,108–9.

[48] 'Encomium', ed. Tartaglia, *Opuscula*, 105.220–1; 106.242; 107.279–81.

[49] See n. 45 above for these letters.

[50] See §53; Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §67; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 21.

[51] See n. 37 above.

precise time of Akropolites' instruction of Theodore must remain an open question.[52]

The letters and Theodore's encomium of Akropolites may be elusive with regard to the period of instruction. They are, however, explicit and clear about Theodore's affection for his teacher. They give expression to warm friendship, intimacy, and a high regard for the 'wise' Akropolites.[53] Akropolites' feelings for his student are less accessible, however, since no letter of his to Theodore has survived, while the verses he wrote as a preface to the letter collection celebrate Theodore's writing skills but do not disclose Akropolites' sentiments for the writer.[54]

In addition to his teaching, in John III's reign Akropolites performed other functions which he was to continue to carry out for the rest of his life.[55] In 1246, on his first datable journey outside Anatolia, he was responsible for drafting imperial letters to be sent to the territories which the emperor had gained through negotiations in the Rhodope area and in Macedonia.[56] In his next intervention in the *History*, Akropolites relates that he was among those sent by the emperor John in 1252 to conclude a treaty with Michael II of Epiros at Larissa. He may have been involved in drafting the treaty as well, for Akropolites comments that at this time he was engaged in preparing the 'more high level documents which deserved special care'.[57] Another ambassadorial mission Akropolites accomplished at some unspecified date, but certainly in the reign of John III, was a journey to Constantinople. In his letter to Akropolites, the only source for this embassy, Theodore II claims that 'there is no enmity of humans that you, mediating, cannot resolve'.[58]

Akropolites continued to be responsible for drafting documents under Theodore II. In the first two years of Theodore's reign, Akropolites travelled in Thrace and Macedonia with the emperor. In the course of the first Bulgarian campaign in 1254–5, he describes his work as that of preparing

[52] The second half of the 1240s seems a likely time, and certainly before 1252, since Akrop. was away from 1252–4 for long periods: §49 (Vodena, 1252), §50 (Philippi, 1253), §52 (return to Asia Minor, winter 1253/4).

[53] *Epistulae*, 78.43: 'you, the wise one'; 79.23–4: 'you the evergreen sapling of philosophy'; 86.1: 'my Akropolites'; 88.29–31: 'Soon we shall see the Hellespont, recalling the memory of our separation'; 89.1: 'We suffer, along with other things, also the great thing, deprivation of you'; 91.7–9: 'I praise you the philosopher'.

[54] It is only in the *History* that Akrop.'s relationship with Theodore is revealed but that work does not provide evidence contemporary with the 1240s and 1250s. What Akrop. wrote after Theodore's death, in the reign of Michael VIII, cannot be read as a reflection of his relations with Theodore during the latter's lifetime. On this, see below, 57–60, 62, 64–5.

[55] See below, 19–28, for a discussion of the titles Akrop. held.

[56] §44.

[57] See at §49.26, 39.

[58] *Epistulae*, 109–10, here at 109.5: *ἡ σὴ πορεία ἐπὶ τὴν Κωνσταντίνου*; 109.7–8: *οὐκ ἦν γὰρ ἔχθρα βροτῶν, ἣν σὺ μεσάσων οὐ λύσεις.*

the documents and administering the oaths in connection with a peace agreement with Michael II Asan.[59] It was during Theodore II's second Bulgarian campaign in 1256 that Akropolites was given a charge with very different responsibilities. Theodore appointed Akropolites *praitor*, a function which gave him military as well as fiscal duties for Albanon and western Macedonia.[60] He says of this work, 'It was assigned to me and I was given licence to do the following: to replace, as I wished, the tax collectors and administrators of fiscal affairs, commanders of armies and those who held command of regions'.[61] Akropolites was the first member of his family to undertake military duties.[62] He had no experience in this area. However, he was *praitor* for a short time only, for the territory under his charge was rapidly taken by Michael II of Epiros.[63] Akropolites surrendered Prilep to him, became his prisoner and spent two years in captivity, probably at Arta.[64] His release occurred after the battle of Pelagonia, in 1259 or early 1260, although Michael VIII had negotiated earlier for Akropolites' release, upon becoming emperor.[65]

One of the last duties Akropolites performed for the empire of Nicaea upon his return from Epiros was to act as ambassador to Trnovo, to the court of Constantine Tich, in the winter of 1260–1. Akropolites does not say what the purpose of his embassy was.[66]

Upon his return to Constantinople Akropolites began to teach, in the early 1260s, perhaps as early as 1262. According to Gregory of Cyprus, one of two students of Akropolites in the capital known by name, the emperor released Akropolites from his 'public cares' in order to allow him to remedy the 'dearth of learning'.[67] In an oration written in 1270–2 and addressed to the emperor Michael, Gregory assigns credit to Akropolites for single-handedly saving 'the seeds and sparks of learning' from extinction.[68] Although the restoration of learning by a specific emperor or scholar is a recurring motif in Byzantine writing,[69] the topos can be shown to bear relation to the reality of reconquered Constantinople. The instruction Akropolites gave was the first

[59] See at §63.10. [60] See at §66.9, §68.7. [61] §68.7.

[62] The only other member of the family with a similar charge is Leo Akropolites, *doux* of Serres and Strymon, attested for 1265 (not 1295, as previously thought) in a *prostagma* of Michael VIII: *Actes de Vatopédi* I, no. 18, 168–9. It is not known what relation he was to George.

[63] §72. [64] §82.5. [65] §79, §82. [66] §84.2.

[67] Ed. Lameere, 185.10–11.

[68] PG 142.345–85, here at 380D–381D. In this oration he refers to Akrop. as 'our Aristotle or even Plato': 381A. For the date of the oration, see J. Verpeaux, *Nicéphore Choumnos* (Paris, 1959), 35 and n. 3.

[69] C. Mango, *Byzantium, the empire of the New Rome* (London, 1980, repr. 1998), 147; also B. Bydén, *Theodore Metochites*' Stoicheiosis Astronomike *and the study of natural philosophy and mathematics in early Palaiologan Byzantium* (Göteborg, 2003), 238–40. For these claims in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see Psellos, *Chronographia* I, 135.4–9; Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, 5.8.2.

attempt to re-establish higher education in the capital. Furthermore, until 1265 Akropolites was alone in giving instruction. In that year, the patriarch Germanos III (1265–6) requested of the emperor Michael that he allow the monk Manuel Holobolos to teach. According to Pachymeres, the patriarch phrased his request in these terms: 'the *megas logothetes* George Akropolites has been giving lessons, established by your command, emperor, for a considerable time, and he is tired now. It is necessary to bring others forth, not least men of the church.'[70] The emperor assented to the patriarch's appeal and confirmed Holobolos' appointment as rhetor.[71]

The reported speech of the patriarch implies that Germanos was proposing the 'retirement' of Akropolites and his replacement by Holobolos. If this was his intention it was never carried out, for Akropolites continued to teach after Holobolos' appointment in 1265. Constantine Akropolites refers to the studies of a certain *hypatos*, first with 'the wise Holobolos and with my father after him in higher studies'.[72] The *hypatos* has been identified with John Pediasimos who was a fellow student of Gregory of Cyprus[73] and thus, also, the second student of Akropolites known by name.

More evidence that Akropolites taught beyond the date of Holobolos' appointment comes from Gregory of Cyprus' 'autobiography' in which he states the length of time he studied with Akropolites, as well as the content of the lessons. Akropolites taught Aristotle, the geometry of Euclid, the arithmetic of Nikomachos, and then moved on to syllogistics and analytics. He set his students exercises in composition before advancing to a higher level of Aristotle.[74] Gregory was 26 when he began his studies as one of the youngest

[70] Pach. II, 369.5–371.5; Failler, 'Pachymeriana Nova', 190–3. For the date of the appointment, before 25 July 1265, see Failler, 'Chronologie', II, 175–6.

[71] On this appointment, see Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople—1261?', 13–41. For discussion of Holobolos' position and place of instruction, and the question of the revival of a 'patriarchal school', see S. Mergiali-Falangas, 'L'école Saint Paul de l'Orphelinat à Constantinople: bref aperçu sur son statut et son histoire', *REB* 49 (1991), 237–47.

[72] Cod. Ambros. H 81 sup. f. 318 r: *τοῖς περιαδομένοις τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῶν σοφοῖς συγγενόμενος Ὁλοβώλῳ τῷ πάνυ τῷ ἐμῷ τε πατρὶ μετὰ τοῦτον ἐφ' ὑψηλοτέροις μαθήμασι*. Both Akropolites and Holobolos taught at the 'higher' level. This is clear from references to Holobolos' teaching the 'Organon' of Aristotle: S. Lampros, '*Επιγράμματα Θωμᾶ Γοριανίτου*', *NéosHell* 12 (1915), 435–8 (epigram, dated 1272–3, of Thomas Gorianites for Holobolos who was teaching him the Organon). See also Pérez Martín, 'Le conflit de l'Union des Églises (1274) et son reflet dans l'enseignement supérieur de Constantinople', 412–16.

[73] Constantinides, *Higher education*, 117–19. For the letter of Gregory of Cyprus in which he reminds Pediasimos that they were students together: Eustratiades, '*Ἐπιστολαί*', *ΕΦ* 1 (1908), 431–2.

[74] Ed. Lameere, 185, 187; oration for Michael VIII: PG 142.381A–D. Constantinides, *Higher education*, 117–19; S. Mergiale, *L'Enseignement et les lettres pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261–1453)* (Athens, 1996), 15–18. Pérez Martín, 'Le conflit de l'Union des Églises (1274) et son reflet dans l'enseignement supérieur de Constantinople', 412–13, comments that Akrop.'s name is not cited in any of the commentaries of Aristotle in Palaiologan manuscripts but suggests that the Ambros. M71 sup. (525), copied in part by Gregory of Cyprus, could give evidence of his work on Aristotle.

in the group of students. He finished at 33.[75] If he studied with Akropolites for those seven years, and he does not indicate otherwise, Akropolites would have been teaching Gregory and others from 1267 until 1274.[76]

None of the sources which mention higher education in Constantinople after 1261 gives any indication of places of instruction or numbers of students. It is certain only that by 1265 a layman and an ecclesiastic gave instruction in higher studies and one held a title, rhetor, associated with the hierarchy of the patriarchate and with teaching before 1204.[77] If Akropolites held a title as a teacher, it is not known.

The evidence from Gregory of Cyprus points to a long teaching period for Akropolites, at least 10 years. If this is the case, Akropolites should be given greater credit for the 'Palaiologan Renaissance' than has hitherto been the case.[78] Akropolites was not, however, engaged only in teaching philosophy and rhetoric in that period, even if Gregory says that Akropolites was given leave from his public duties. He carried on fulfilling some of his duties as *megas logothetes*, as can be seen from his letter to the *sebastokrator* John Tornikes in which he refers to his 'teaching the Organon and settling the cases of the *sekreton*', a reference to his judicial duties as *megas logothetes*.[79] Furthermore, it is known from Pachymeres that Akropolites was given the charge of punishing the Arsenites, an episode that can be dated to 1267 from the context in which it is mentioned.[80] A further judicial function was given to him in 1273 when he was sent by the emperor Michael to sit with the synod as a member of the senate, to judge the *chartophylax* John Bekkos.[81] Thus Akropolites' teaching, in the years when Gregory would have been studying with him, was interrupted by other duties.[82]

In 1274 Akropolites took part in the most celebrated of his diplomatic missions, as head of a five-man delegation to the council at Lyons where he swore to accept the primacy of the Roman church and to pledge obedience to

[75] Ed. Lameere, 187.18–19; Constantinides, *Higher education*, 32. See also Gregory's letters to Akropolites in which he addresses him as 'my teacher' and asks him to give his opinion on a *logos* he has written: Eustratiades, '*Ἐπιστολαί*', *ἘΦ* 3 (1909), no. 111, pp 42–4, no. 112, pp 44–5.

[76] This date conforms with Gregory's statement that troubles in the church interrupted his education. The date also coincides with Akrop.'s departure from Constantinople for Lyons. See Constantinides, *Higher education*, 32, 35.

[77] See above n. 71.

[78] Cf. Fryde, *The early Palaeologan Renaissance*, 87–90; Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*, 225.

[79] *Opera* II, 67–9, here at 67.5–9. For these duties, see below, 23–4.

[80] Pach. II, 409.23–411.2; Failler, 'Chronologie', II, 184. Pach. describes the punishments in detail. Arsenites were whipped, beaten, suspended, paraded through the agora and, finally, exiled.

[81] Pach. II, 482 n. 2 and 483.

[82] See Pérez Martín, 'Le conflit de l'Union des Églises', 412–13.



Fig. 1 Signature of George Akropolites: chrysobull of 1277, Chilandari. Archives de l'Athos photographic collection, by kind permission of J. Lefort

it on his own behalf and that of the emperor.[83] From this time until his death in 1282, there are few traces of him, apart from his signature on a chrysobull of 1277[84] and an ambassadorial journey, his last recorded public duty. In 1281/2 he travelled to Trebizond, to the emperor John II (1280–97), to make preliminary arrangements for the latter's marriage to the daughter of Michael VIII, Eudokia Palaiologina. The emperor Michael, aiming to persuade John II to renounce his suspicions of Michael's intentions and to travel to Constantinople, chose for this mission 'grand and wise men' whose high status and skill in speaking would win John's confidence and make him amenable to the suggestion.[85] One of these men was George Akropolites. His embassy failed. However, subsequent negotiation conducted by other ambassadors ended successfully in the marriage of Eudokia and John II in Constantinople at the end of September 1282.[86] Akropolites may not have lived to witness the wedding, for he died in 1282, sometime before the emperor Michael.[87] He would certainly never know that an offspring of the marriage he had attempted to negotiate was one day to marry his own granddaughter.[88]

George Akropolites' assessment of his life is transmitted by his elder son Constantine in his 'Testament' for the monastery of the Anastasis in Constantinople which George restored in a 'major act of patronage'.[89] Constantine relates that as a schoolboy, studying at the secondary level, he would visit his father from time to time while the monastery was undergoing restoration.[90] On one of these occasions his father took him by the hand and stood him before the icon of Christ, saying:

[83] Pach. II, 491–3; 507–9; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, nos 2006–9a, pp 119–21; Roberg, *Die Union*; D. J. Geanakoplos, 'Bonaventura, the two mendicant orders, and the Greeks at the council of Lyons (1274)', *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976), 183–211, esp. 192–4. Constantinides, 'Byzantine scholars and the Union of Lyons (1274)', 86–93, here at 86–8.

[84] *Actes de Chilandar* I, no. 10, 135–8, here at 138.27. The document confirms privileges that had been given to the monastery by Alexios III. See below, 23 n. 140 and Fig. 1.

[85] Pach. II, 653.14–655.31; Failler, 'Chronologie', II, 246–7; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 2050, p. 137–8. A letter of the monk Methodios to Gregory of Cyprus implies that Gregory also took part in the embassy: Laurent and Darrouzès, *Dossier grec de l'union de Lyon 1273–1277*, 521.2–5 and 520 n. 1.

[86] Pach. II, 659.5–6; Failler, 'Chronologie', II, 246–7.

[87] Michael VIII died on 11 December 1282, having appointed a new *megas logothetes*, Theodore Mouzalon, to replace George Akropolites: Pach. II, 667.7–16; III, 19.18–19.

[88] Failler, 'Chronologie', II, 246–7; Nicol, 'Constantine Akropolites', 252–3.

[89] I. Ševčenko, 'Society and intellectual life in the fourteenth century', *Actes du XIV^e congrès international des études byzantines*, I (Bucharest, 1971), 90. On this monastery, situated near the *embolos* of Domninos, north of the Tetrapylon, see Janin, *Le siège de Constantinople*, 20–6. For the early history of the monastery, see R. Snee, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Anastasia church: Arianism, the Goths and hagiography', *DOP* 52 (1998), 157–86, esp. 161–3, 172.

[90] Ed. Delehaye, 281. A precise date cannot be assigned to George's restoration of the monastery. The only indications of date are Constantine's description of himself as a *pais*, studying the *enkyklios*, when the work was being carried out (ed. Delehaye, 280–1). See Kourouses, "*Ὁ λόγιος οἰκουμενικὸς πατριάρχης Ἰωάννης ΙΓ ὁ Γλυκύς*', 338–40, for Constantine's

> He is the One who also provided me with learning,
> the most honourable thing in life, which nothing on earth
> can equal, as one of the wise pagans testified; on account of
> it I became celebrated and prosperous, and I assisted most of
> my relatives, for I will pass over how I attended to the need
> even of strangers to the best of my ability.[91]

The prosperity George speaks of through his son is documented in part by the calculations of expenditure which were made during the restoration of the monastery. Constantine reports in his 'Testament' that expenses up to 16 000 *nomismata* (c. 48 kilograms of gold)[92] were recorded. Thereafter, his father did not keep account of his outlay. Because of the strain on George's resources, however, Constantine's inheritance was reduced by 4500 *nomismata*.[93]

The wealth which George attributed to his learning was accumulated through a lifetime of service to emperors from whom he received titles and land.[94] In the *History*, Akropolites makes reference to his property once, in connection with his imprisonment by Michael II of Epiros in 1257: 'He [Theodore II] issued decrees concerning my properties, stating that no one should dare set foot on them at any time and cause damage.'[95] Akropolites does not indicate where his properties were located; they were presumably in Anatolia but possibly, also, in the 'western' territories. That George may have owned land also in Macedonia is suggested by a chrysobull of 1299/1300 issued by Milutin in favour of the monastery of St George near Skopje. This document mentions fields of Manglavites, (Kosta) Litovoes, Dragotas and Akropolites.[96] Men with these names were involved in the campaign of John III in 1246, in the submission of Melnik and Serres.[97] It was during the same campaign that Akropolites was in charge of preparing letters for the territories which became part of the empire of Nicaea. Although it cannot be shown conclusively that the property belonged since 1246 to the families of the four men, the coincidence of names is compelling.

Akropolites attributes his wealth to his learning and the success this brought him. Yet his marriage to a relation of Michael Palaiologos was essential to the

date of birth, sometime after 1250. For other works of restoration in Constantinople in the 1260s, see A.-M. Talbot, 'The restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII', *DOP* 47 (1993), 243–61; P. Schreiner, 'Die topographische Notiz über Konstantinopel in der Pariser Suda-Handschrift: eine Neuinterpretation', in I. Ševčenko and I. Hutter, ed., *ΑΕΤΟΣ. Studies in honour of Cyril Mango* (Stuttgart, 1998), 273–83.

[91] Ed. Delehaye, 281; translation and commentary by A.-M. Talbot, in *Byzantine monastic foundation documents* IV, no. 46, 1374–82, here 1379. On the typikon or 'testament', see K. A. Manaphes, '*Κωνσταντίνου Ἀκροπολίτου λόγος εἰς τὴν ἀνακαίνισιν τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἀναστάσεως διαθητικός*', *EEBS* 37 (1969–70), 459–65.

[92] I owe this calculation to Philip Grierson. [93] Ed. Delehaye, 281.

[94] See below, 19–28, where Akropolites' titles are discussed.

[95] §72.5. [96] §44.19. [97] §44.

accumulation of wealth and to his success.[98] In 1259 when the emperor Michael approached Michael II, asking for Akropolites' release from captivity, Akropolites reveals, 'I was related to the emperor by marriage and my wife was crying pitifully and prostrating herself at the monarch's feet.'[99] His wife's name, Eudokia, is known from Constantine Akropolites' 'Testament' for the Anastasis monastery, but her precise relationship to Michael Palaiologos cannot be determined.[100] Their marriage had taken place by 1256,[101] because it was in that year that George accompanied Theodore II on the campaign from which he was to return in 1259/60, after his long imprisonment.

Eudokia and George had at least two children, Constantine, the elder, and a son known by his monastic name, Melchisedek.[102] Constantine relates that he had another brother 'not by the law of marriage but by a holier and greater birth, holy baptism'. His brother 'by holy baptism', his spiritual brother, George Iber, was the same age as Constantine and was raised and educated along with him. George later became the monk Gregory and entered the monastery built by Eudokia, the wife of George, his godfather.[103]

Constantine, the elder son, inherited not only the restored monastery of the Anastasis from his father but also his literary interests and his reputation for learning and wisdom.[104] Like his father, Constantine was brought up by the

[98] See also below, 27, for a discussion of this marriage.

[99] See at §79.4. He is mentioned as the emperor's '*gener/gambros*', an in-law by marriage to a female relative, in letters to the pope and in a chrysobull of 1277 for Venice.

[100] Ed. Delehaye, 282. See §79.4 and below, 27.

[101] See §79.4 and below. Their first-born child, Constantine, was born c. 1250–5: Kourouses, '*Ὁ λόγιος οἰκουμενικός πατριάρχης Ἰωάννης ΙΓ' ὁ Γλυκύς*', 337–40, 340 n. 1. Constantine was still alive in 1321 but had died by 1324, according to a patriarchal document of that date in which he is named as the (deceased) *ktetor* of the monastery of the Anastasis: H. Hunger and O. Kresten, *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel* I (Vienna, 1981), no. 73, 430–5, esp. 432.2–21.

[102] He was among the supporters of Philanthropenos, his niece's husband, in his revolt against Andronikos II in Anatolia (1296). He died in the same year. Pach. III, 241.19–20; Nicol, 'Constantine Akropolites', 249–50; A. Laiou, 'Some observations on Alexios Philanthropenos and Maximos Planoudes', *BMGS* 4 (1978), 89–99, here at 94–5. See Constantine's letters: R. Romano, *Costantino Acropolita Epistole* (Naples, 1991), no. 56, p. 151.

[103] Constantine mentions his father's godson in an unpublished work (cod. Ambrosianus, H. 81 Sup. 216, f. 216). See Macrides, 'The Byzantine godfather', 139–62, here at 147–8 and n. 42. Constantine inherited the monastery built by his mother. The identity of the monastery, that of St Paraskeue, is revealed in the unpublished encomium of the saint, written and delivered by Constantine in the church where his mother was buried. See S. Kotzabassi, 'Konstantinos Akropolites, Gregorios *IBHP* und das Kloster der heiligen Paraskeue', '*Ἑλληνικά* 54 (2004), 71–81.

[104] See Romano, *Epistole*, no. 46, 142 (n. 102, above); 'Testament', ed. Delehaye, 280; M. Treu, '*Νέος κώδιξ τῶν ἔργων Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Ἀκροπολίτου*', *Δελτίον τῆς Ἱστορικῆς καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 4 (1892), 48. In his 'testament' for the monastery of the Anastasis, he describes himself as having 'a reputation for learning and wisdom, as others might perhaps say, although I myself would say a desirable education and a noble pursuit' (trans. Talbot, 1378).

emperor and educated by him.[105] Like George, he made a good marriage, to Maria Komnene Tornikina,[106] and he had a similar pattern of imperial service, holding the titles *logothetes tou genikou* and *megas logothetes*.[107] Father and son differed, however, in one central way: they held divergent views on the union of the churches.[108] In his will Constantine praised his father for his learning and acknowledged his debt to him, both for the property he had bequeathed to him and the education he had provided for him. But he added, 'But to speak out and to speak truthfully, this checks me in my praise at the start, this also has prevented me from praising expansively, that is, that he seemed to collide with the church and the traditions of the church, having given most to the master and emperor.'[109] While Pachymeres' judgement on George is harsher, 'most learned but neglectful in matters of conscience',[110] Constantine's list of people to be commemorated in the Anastasis monastery does not include his father's name.[111]

PROMOTIONS AND TITLES

For all Akropolites' interest in telling the readers of his *History* about himself, his role in events, and the high regard in which he was held by emperors,[112] he does not divulge much information about the titles and offices he held.[113] On the one occasion when he does describe the emperor's bestowal of titles on

[105] Pach. II, 625.15–18.

[106] For her name, see 'Testament', ed. Delehaye, 282, and M. Treu, '*Νέος κώδιξ*', 45–50, here at 48 (n. 104 above). She is perhaps the niece of John Tornikes, the *sebastokrator*, with whom George Akropolites corresponded. See above, 14, and Schmalzbauer, 'Die Tornikioi in der Palaiologenzeit', 123–4. Both Constantine and his wife appear as donors on the silver revetment of an icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria, now in the State Tret'iakov Gallery, Moscow. See H. C. Evans, ed., *Faith and Power (1261–1557) (*New York, 2004), cat. no. 4, pp 28–30.

[107] See below, 21–3.

[108] Pach. II, 625.4–22.

[109] Treu, '*Νέος κώδιξ*', 48 (n. 104 above): *μᾶλλον δὲ ἵν' ἐξείπω καὶ ἀληθῶς εἴπω, τοῦτί με καὶ πρὸς τοὺς κατὰ πάροδον ἐπαίνους ἀναστέλλει, ὃ δὴ καὶ πλατυκῶς ἐγκωμιάσαι κεκώληκε. τὸ δέ ἐστι τὸ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ τοῖς τῆς ἐκκλησίας θεσμοῖς δόξαι προσκροῦσαι τῷ δεσπότῃ καὶ βασιλεῖ τὰ πολλὰ χαρισάμενον.*

[110] Pach. (II, 409.24–5): *εἰς λογοθέτας μεγάλῳ καὶ σοφῷ τὰ μάλιστα, πλὴν κατημελημένως τῶν εἰς συνείδησιν ἔχοντι.* He makes this comment in the context of reporting Akropolites' role in the punishment of the Arsenites.

[111] Ed. Delehaye, §6, 282, §7, 283. The absence of George's name in the list of commemorations seems even more pointed since Constantine's mother, Eudokia, is mentioned, although she was not buried in the Anastasis monastery but rather in the monastery dedicated to St Paraskeue which she had built (see n. 103 above).

[112] See below, 43–6.

[113] With the exception of his function as *praitor*: §66, §68.

him and four other men, he does not give the name of his own title, even though he lists those of the others.[114] Nor are contemporary writers helpful in establishing the stages in Akropolites' career. The letters of Theodore II to Akropolites and to others call Akropolites 'wise' and 'the philosopher',[115] while Skoutariotes and Pachymeres consistently refer to him as 'the *megas logothetes*', his last and highest office.

Today Akropolites is known by the last title he held. He is thought, however, to have held two earlier titles, *megas logariastes* and *logothetes tou genikou*.[116] For these two titles there is no evidence apart from the lemmata to two works in verse form, a poem on the death of the empress Eirene (d. 1239) and an epigram for an icon of the Theotokos.[117]

It was Heisenberg who first attributed to Akropolites' authorship verses written on the death of the empress Eirene which bear the lemma 'verses of the *megas logariastes*', without the name of an author.[118] The second editor of the poem, Hörandner, accepted Heisenberg's attribution, although he admitted the weakness of Heisenberg's argument—the presence of the word 'Eden' in these verses and in the epigram by Akropolites.[119]

The attribution of the poem to George Akropolites must now be rejected and with it, the title of *megas logariastes*. No internal evidence speaks in favour of Akropolites as its author, while other considerations weigh against it. Akropolites was 21 or 22 years old at the time of the empress Eirene's death; he was still a student.[120] These are not circumstances in which he could have been appointed *megas logariastes*, an important financial office before 1204.[121] After 1204 at Nicaea, the only known *megas logariastes* was Demetrios Karykes, a man greatly esteemed for his learning, an *hypatos ton philosophon* and *krites*, mentioned as active in 1234.[122]

[114] §60. See too §63. 9, where he states that the emperor addressed him by his *offikion* but does not say what it was.

[115] See above, 11 n. 53.

[116] Heisenberg, *Opera* II, vii–viii; Angold, *Exile*, 206; Guilland, 'Les logothètes', 104–5; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 3–4.

[117] See below, 76–8, for a catalogue of Akrop.'s written works.

[118] *Opera* II, 3.

[119] Hörandner, 'Prodromos-Reminiszenzen bei Dichtern der nikänischen Zeit', 88–104, esp. 96–7.

[120] See above, 9.

[121] Guilland, 'Le logariaste', 101–13; Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XI siècle (1025–1118)', 140–1; Magdalino, 'Justice and finance in the Byzantine state, ninth to twelfth centuries', 93–115, here 110–13. For a *megas logariastes* in Epiros, an Alyates, documented in an act of 1228, see Prinzing, 'Studien', II, 102 and n. 272.

[122] Blem., *Autobiographia* II, §8–16, §25–8; Munitiz, *A Partial Account,* 15, 18, 32, 98–103; Angold, 'Administration of the empire of Nicaea', 127–38, here 131.

Although it is unlikely that Akropolites was *megas logariastes*,[123] he does appear to have held the title of *logothetes tou genikou*. The evidence is meagre—one lemma in the epigram for an icon of the Theotokos which assigns authorship to George Akropolites.[124] That the ascription of this title to Akropolites is correct is given support by the pattern of advancement of a *logothetes tou genikou* to *megas logothetes*, known and established for later thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century office-holders, Theodore Mouzalon, Constantine Akropolites, and Theodore Metochites.[125] George Akropolites may well have been the first to have advanced from the one to the other, thus establishing this progression.

At Nicaea, to judge from Akropolites who is the only attested holder of the title, the fiscal function of the office of *logothetes tou genikou*, which was known from before 1204, no longer applied.[126] Akropolites describes his duties in the *History*. In the 1240s and 1250s he drafted letters and documents and acted as ambassador.[127] From this evidence it would appear that the title of *logothetes tou genikou* was honorific at Nicaea.

From the epigram for the icon of the Theotokos it is not possible to determine when Akropolites held the title.[128] However, Heisenberg surmised that when Akropolites drafted letters in 1246 for the newly reconquered territories, it was as *logothetes tou genikou* since, in his view, Akropolites would have had to have held some title while carrying out these duties.[129] However, there is nothing in the *History* to support this suggestion. On the contrary, the example of Niketas Choniates in 1187 shows that those who were employed to write letters and news bulletins to Constantinople while they accompanied the emperor on campaign were 'imperial secretaries'.[130]

While it is not certain that Akropolites was already *logothetes tou genikou* by 1246, he appears from his own account to have held a title by 1252. In the

[123] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 450–1, comments on the 'distinctly odd' progression from *megas logariastes* to *logothetes tou genikou*.

[124] Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 6–7. E. Rostagno and N. Festa, 'Codici greci Laurenziani meno noti', *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica* 2 (1894), 303.

[125] Guilland, 'Les logothètes', 106–10; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 450–1.

[126] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 433–4, 439, 441.

[127] See above, 11–12.

[128] The poem was written on behalf of Nicholas Kaloeidas. Although the Kaloeidas family is well attested for the area of Smyrna, the only member of the family with the name Nicholas is a signatory of a document of 1216, a *nomikos* of Ephesos: MM VI, 176; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 157–8; Angold, *Exile*, 269, 278. If Akrop. is indeed the author of the poem, the work must have been written for another Kaloeidas.

[129] §44. Heisenberg, *Opera* II, vii–viii and n. 7; also Angold, *Exile*, 164.

[130] Chon., *Orationes*, 6.22–4, and van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 24, 65–79; Chon., *Historia*, 397.87–8: *ὑπογραμματεύων*. See also the commentary at §44.22. For *basilikoi grammatikoi* in the twelfth century, see Oikonomides, 'La chancellerie impériale de Byzance du 13^{e} au 14^{e} siècle', 172 and n. 25; at Nicaea, see Angold, *Exile*, 165 and n. 97.



Fig. 2 Seal of George Akropolites as *megas logothetes.* Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University, Bequest of Thomas Whittemore, 1951.31.5.1285

course of relating how Demetrios Tornikes' death created a void in the administration, he reveals that

> . . . the emperor used in his service chance people, untitled secretaries, Joseph Mesopotamites, and Nikephoros Alyates who assisted him, but for the more high level documents which deserved special care, John Makrotos and me.[131]

In this passage he makes a distinction between the 'untitled secretaries',[132] on the one hand, and John Makrotos and himself, on the other. If this reading is correct, Akropolites held a title by 1252, in the reign of John III. Since *logothetes tou genikou* is the only title known to have been held by him before that of *megas logothetes,* he might have held this title at that time.

At the beginning of his reign, in 1255, Theodore II encamped at Lampsakos upon returning from his first Bulgarian campaign, and rewarded five men with dignities and offices. Akropolites complains that the men were unworthy

[131] At §49.22–6.
[132] See the commentary at §49.22 for this interpretation of '*γραμματικοῖς ἀνωνύμοις*'.

and so he was distressed to be associated with them. But associated he was for, explains Akropolites, 'the ruler altered my name also and did not allow Akropolites to be pronounced unaccompanied'.[133] In this indirect way he indicates that he too was given a title. In the case of three of the five men mentioned in this passage, Akropolites divulges the old titles the men held along with the new. For Karyanites and himself, however, he gives no previous title. Thus we cannot know what 'promotion' was bestowed on Akropolites. Was it a first title, a higher title or, less likely, an epithet?[134] However, if we accept that Akropolites was already *logothetes tou genikou* in the reign of John III, then in 1255 he became *megas logothetes.*[135]

Akropolites' allusive reference to his promotion can be compared to the account given by Skoutariotes. Skoutariotes also relates the event, taking his narrative from the *History*, but he omits reference to Akropolites. When he next mentions Akropolites in recounting an event of 1256, he calls him the *megas logothetes.*[136] From Skoutariotes, then, it would appear that Akropolites was indeed made *megas logothetes* in 1255.[137] This is the most secure indication we have. However, the author of the chronicle may simply have used the title by which Akropolites was known at the time of his writing.

Akropolites' duties appear to have been similar throughout his life, under each of the emperors he served, whatever title he held. In John III's reign he drafted letters and went on embassies.[138] Under Theodore II Akropolites relates that he was responsible for drawing up a treaty, and for the formal dismissal of the pope's ambassadors.[139] Similarly, for Michael VIII, Akropolites acted as ambassador and was involved in issuing documents.[140] Akropolites' ambassadorial capacity and responsibility for documents combine to present a picture of the *megas logothetes* as Pseudo-Kodinos describes him in the fourteenth century: 'he draws up the documents sent by the emperor to

[133] At §60.13.

[134] Akrop. was already called *πάνσοφος* and *φιλόσοφος* in Theodore II's letters which date from before his accession to the throne: *Epistulae*, 36.9; also Theodore's 'Encomium' to George: *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 96.

[135] Contrary to Macrides, *ODB* I, 49. For Akrop.'s seal as *megas logothetes*, see Oikonomides, *Dated Byzantine lead seals*, no. 136, p. 128. See Fig. 2, p. 22 above.

[136] Skout. 525.28–9; 526.2, 9–10.

[137] Angold, *Exile*, 164, came to this conclusion on the basis of the reference by Skoutariotes.

[138] See §49.26, 39.

[139] See text at §63.9, 10, §67.3; above, 11–12.

[140] The only surviving document associated with Akropolites is a chrysobull of 1277 for the monastery of Chilandari: *Actes de Chilandar* I, no. 10, 138.27: *διὰ τοῦ μεγάλου λογοθέτου Γεωργίου τοῦ Ἀκροπολίτου*. There is no consensus of opinion as to what the *dia*-entry represents. The person who signs '*dia*' could be the official responsible for issuing the document for registration in the relevant sekreta or the one who brought to the emperor's attention the matter with which the legislation is concerned. See Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I Komnenos', 104–5 and nn 36, 39. See also the commentary at §49.19.

foreign rulers'.[141] If one applies this definition, Akropolites may have been *megas logothetes* already under Theodore II.

Under Michael VIII in Constantinople, Akropolites is known to have been head of a court of justice. John Tornikes, writing to Akropolites in Constantinople after 1261, referred to his conducting 'the cases of the sekreton', that is, those of the *megas logothetes*.[142] There is no earlier reference to Akropolites as head of a court, a function of the *megas logothetes* at the end of the twelfth century but also in the early thirteenth century. The name of the only (other) *megas logothetes* known for Nicaea, John Strategopoulos, appears in the context of a dispute over property.[143] The mention of Akropolites' judicial duties in Constantinople is a clear sign that he was fulfilling the functions of a *megas logothetes* after 1261.

Whatever title Akropolites received in 1255, it is the context in which his promotion occurred that is significant. Akropolites mentions himself and four other men. He describes the scene, including his own involvement, only to dissociate himself: 'In these childish games I also got caught up, unwillingly, by Themis, and under compulsion, as I should not have been, and I appeared together with the players as an unfortunate plaything.'[144] He is at pains to extricate himself from the company of the other four. His reasons would seem to be a lack of interest in titles/dignities, 'childish games', and a low opinion of those in whose company he 'unwillingly' found himself, 'pitiful men ... false of tongue'.

However, the real reason for his abhorrence should be sought in a later passage of the *History*, as Akropolites himself tells his readers: 'But my narrative has related these things in detail in order to clarify later events' (§60). The link between the promotions and the later narrative is the verse from the *Iliad* (24.261), 'false of tongue, nimble of foot, peerless at beating the floor in dance'. Akropolites cites the same verse, Priam's description of his worthless sons, again at §75 to refer to the same four men later, after the death of the emperor Theodore II in 1258. His denunciation is even stronger in that context: 'loathsome little men, worthless specimens of humanity ...'. Why? It was with these men, Theodore II's favourites, that Akropolites was promoted. They were the men who were too close to Theodore to be allowed to live after his death.

Akropolites belongs to the group of five in more ways than he wants his readers to know. The importance which these men—the Mouzalon brothers,

[141] Ed. Verpeaux, 174.1–5.

[142] Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 67–9. The letter is known only from Akropolites' reply.

[143] MM IV, 290–5, esp. 295: for the year 1216; Oikonomides, 'La chancellerie impériale de Byzance du 13e au 15e siècle', 168–9; Guilland, 'Les logothètes', 104; Angold, *Exile*, 166–7.

[144] §60. See Macrides, 'The historian in the history', 221–2.

John Angelos, Karyanites and Akropolites—held for Theodore II can be understood from a treatise on rulers and their subjects which the emperor addressed to George Mouzalon. The emperor speaks of the five friends of Alexander the Great. They shared with him in his deliberations; they were like his five senses:

> He called them friends and decorated them with glory...
> and honoured them as worthy friends. Whence he is celebrated and a source of admiration, more so for this honouring of his friends than for the greatness and divine nature of his accomplishments.[145]

In the same treatise Theodore states, 'If I may say something novel: the love of true subjects prevails completely over many great blood relations.'[146] Pachymeres' account of Theodore shows that the scholarly emperor put these ideas into practice. Theodore honoured his friends over his relations, he valued friendship over kinship, bestowing dignities on those he believed had merit, and overlooking those who already had the advantages of blood, going so far as to displace them from their offices.[147] In addition to the high dignities and titles Theodore gave to those he valued, he arranged marriages between non-nobles and nobles (*eugeneis*).[148] George Mouzalon was married to Theodora Kantakouzene, a cousin of Michael Palaiologos, while Andronikos Mouzalon was married to the daughter of Raoul. In this way, these men were made 'noble' by the emperor.[149]

By contrast, the men who were noble by blood, members of the 'golden chain'[150] of families, were distrusted, displaced and punished by Theodore. Akropolites lists the disaffected: Strategopoulos, Tornikes, Philes, Zagarommates, Raoul, Alyates, 'noble men of the first rank'.[151] It was they who were behind the brutal murder of the Mouzalon brothers.[152] The same men

[145] *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 120–40, here 121.23–37. Angelov, *Imperial ideology*, 243. Blemmydes' *Imperial Statue* may be a source for the example of Alexander the Great. See Hunger and Ševčenko, *Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Βασιλικὸς Ἀνδριάς und dessen Metaphrase*, §75, p. 66: 'He [Alexander] considered his friends to be his treasures.' It seems likely, however, that Blemmydes and Theodore II were drawing from another source since the *Imperial Statue* makes no reference to the number of Alexander's friends.

[146] *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 137.435–7.

[147] Pach. I, 41.19–43.2, 61.6–29. See also Angelov, *Imperial ideology*, 235–44.

[148] Pach. I, 41.9–13, 55.11–17. Contrast Theodore II's 'arranged' marriages with the actions of Manuel I who 'dissolved matches of various noble women who were joined with ignoble men, and punished the latter severely': Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 211, citing Balsamon. For the change in the style of ruling, see Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 269–82.

[149] Pach. I, 41–43, 55.13: τὸ εὐγενὲς πρὸς τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἔρρεπε....

[150] Pach. I, 93.14–15: ἡ μεγαλογενὴς σειρὰ καὶ χρυσῆ.

[151] At §75.6: 'the noble men of the first rank who had been maltreated by the emperor'.

[152] At §75.18.

were behind the elevation of Michael Palaiologos to the throne.[153] After the Mouzalons, John Angelos and Karyanites also became victims of the purge. Karyanites was imprisoned by Michael Palaiologos, while John Angelos fled but later committed suicide.[154] Thus, of the five friends of Theodore II promoted in 1255, only Akropolites survived. When Michael came to the throne, Akropolites was safely out of the way in prison in Epiros.[155]

The passage in which Akropolites gives an account of the promotions of 1255 is, therefore, essential to an understanding of the most central aspects of Akropolites' narrative, his social attitudes, his position at court, his views, and characterizations of the emperors at Nicaea. The passage has been interpreted as showing Akropolites' disdain for promotions and titles,[156] yet a quick look through the *History* shows how much Akropolites valued titles and therefore recorded them. His dislike is not for titles and promotions but rather for the men who received them. He expresses superiority over the 'pitiful men, worth no more than three obols', and his superiority has been taken for granted.[157] Yet, in what way was Akropolites superior? Certainly the Mouzalon brothers were not noble men. Blemmydes, Pachymeres and Gregoras state this clearly. They were not from 'an illustrious family', they had 'not the slightest share of nobility'.[158] However, although this was indeed the case, the Mouzalon family had produced a governor of Nicaea[159] and Akropolites himself has positive comments to make about a John Mouzalon, a *mystikos*, 'suited to imperial affairs more than others'.[160] Karyanites, likewise promoted in 1255, was from a Constantinopolitan family of civil servants, like Akropolites.[161] Only the identity of John Angelos, the fifth member of the group, is elusive.[162] Nothing can be said with certainty about him.

Akropolites was, then, neither more noble, nor more able than the four men with whom he was promoted. The four men were not of a low social status nor he of a high one, as has been thought. The social position of the Mouzalons, their lack of noble blood, would not have been singled out for comment by Byzantine writers if it were not for the unusual preferment Theodore II

[153] Pach. I, 107–11.

[154] According to Akrop.: at §77.6, 7. But note the difference in the accounts of Akrop. and Pach. on these two men.

[155] Text at §79.3–6.

[156] Hunger, *Literatur* I, 445; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 38–9, but see his appendix, 245–65.

[157] *ODB* III, 2041: 'ministers of humble origin, such as George Mouzalon'.

[158] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §88: 'a fellow . . . of despicably low birth . . . .'; Pach. I, 41.14; Greg. I, 62.4–5.

[159] See the commentary at §59.9. [160] §40.21. [161] §60.9.

[162] Akrop. mentions a John Angelos several times. These cannot all be references to the same man. See at §58.4.

showed them over noble families from Constantinople.[163] Like the Mouzalon brothers,[164] Akropolites became one of the emperor Theodore's new men, brought up and educated at court,[165] befriended by Theodore, given an office and a marriage alliance traditionally bestowed on old blood. Theodore II changed the fortune of the Akropolites family from that of civil functionaries to one of nobility.

Pachymeres is the source of our knowledge about Theodore's arranged marriages for his favourites.[166] Akropolites' marriage is not mentioned among those Pachymeres discusses, but Akropolites himself refers to his relationship by marriage to Michael VIII, and Michael's letters to pope Gregory X refer to his *gener* George Akropolites, while in a chrysobull of 1277 George is called the emperor's *gambros*.[167] The exact relationship of George's wife with Michael, as well as the exact date of the marriage, cannot be ascertained. However, as stated earlier, Eudokia and George were certainly married by 1256 and the marriage is one which bears the characteristics of Theodore II's arrangements.[168] If we think of George as being in a different category from the others with whom he was promoted, it is because he has done such a good job in convincing us of his social superiority to, and separateness from, them.

The clearest indication that Akropolites did indeed become 'ennobled' by Theodore II, that he was raised well above his status by birth, is his appointment as *praitor* in 1256. This function put Akropolites in excellent company, for his predecessors in this position had been Andronikos Palaiologos, the *megas domestikos*, father of Michael, and Theodore Philes—both men appointed by John III. However, the modern reader of the *History* does not make the connection between their appointment and that of Akropolites for Akropolites does not say of them that they were appointed as *praitores*.[169] This information is supplied by other sources. The funeral oration for Andronikos by Jacob of Ochrid refers to him as *anthypatos*, an archaizing term for a *praitor*.[170] For Philes the designation of *praitor* is

[163] The Mouzalons, like other favourites of Theodore II, were from Asia Minor. See Puech, *L'Aristocratie et le pouvoir à Byzance au XIII^e siècle*, 345–6, 388–94, who argues that Theodore was trying to establish in Anatolia a counterweight to the influence of the Palaiologoi in the western provinces. See Akrop. §60.3, §66.5 for references to other Anatolian favourites of Theodore II; see also below, 40–1.

[164] Pach. I, 41, 65; Greg. I, 62. [165] §32. [166] Pach. I, 41.10–13. [167] §79.4.

[168] For the date, see above, 18. Rek, 'Georgios Akropolites', 36–7, asserts that the marriage could not have taken place under Theodore II because of the latter's hatred and suspicion of Michael Palaiologos. He therefore gives a date for the marriage in John III's reign, before Michael's trial for treason in 1253. However, the argument is not convincing since Michael's own marriage to the emperor John III's grandniece was arranged shortly after his trial for treason and Michael continued to hold an appointment in the reign of Theodore II, while Theodore also arranged marriages involving Palaiologoi in his reign. See §51, §64.

[169] §46.2, 7. [170] See §46.2.

known from a letter of Theodore II in which he expresses rage against the 'unlawful *praitor*'.[171] Like the other two, Akropolites was based in Thessalonike[172] and exercised control over the military commanders in the area, as well as performing fiscal functions.[173] Andronikos Palaiologos had died in his post in the reign of John III, while Philes was removed from the position by Theodore II who had him blinded because he was suspicious of him. Akropolites' promotion therefore fits Theodore's policy of removing men of blood from key positions and replacing them with his own trusted men of less illustrious birth.[174]

If the above interpretation is correct, Akropolites owed his career and his fortune to the gifts of John III and Theodore II. The Akropolites family became distinguished through the noble marriage arranged for George by Theodore II. This marriage allowed Akropolites to survive the change of dynasty in 1259 and to enter Constantinople to write the history of the 'empire of Nicaea' from the point of view of the Constantinopolitan *eugeneis*. Like his teacher, Nikephoros Blemmydes, Akropolites remained fixed on the past,[175] on the Constantinople of the Komnenoi that Michael VIII restored. It fell to Skoutariotes and Pachymeres to write the history of the Anatolian subjects of the Laskarides.[176]

CHRONOLOGY OF GEORGE AKROPOLITES' LIFE

1217	born in Constantinople
1233	leaves Constantinople for the 'empire of Nicaea', aged 16
1234	begins his higher education, aged 17
1234–8/9	studies with Hexapterygos
1238/9	begins his studies with Blemmydes
1239	discusses causes of solar eclipse, aged 21
1240s	tutor to Theodore II
(1244?	embassy to Constantinople)
1246	accompanies John III on campaign to Serres/Thessalonike

[171] §46.7. [172] §66.9, §67.2. [173] §67; §68.7.

[174] Pach. I, 41.19–43.1, 61.6–20.

[175] Ahrweiler, 'L'expérience nicéenne', 33. For similarities in the attitudes of the two men, see below, 46–51.

[176] For Skout.'s and Pach.'s versions, see below, 68–75.

	responsible for writing letters to newly conquered towns
(before 1252?	presents Theodore II with a collection of his letters)
1252	accompanies John III to the west
	embassy to Michael II to conclude treaty
1253	trial of Michael Palaiologos at Philippi
	Akrop. asked to give judgement
1254–5	accompanies Theodore II on Bulgarian campaign
	promotion (Dec. 1255)
(before 1256	marriage to Eudokia, a relation of Michael Palaiologos)
1256	second Bulgarian campaign
	draws up treaty and administers oaths
1256	appointed *praitor* for Albanon and western Macedonia
1257	dismisses the ambassadors of pope Alexander IV
	surrenders Prilep to Michael II
	imprisoned in Arta
1259/60	released from captivity
Dec. 1260–Jan. 1261	embassy to Trnovo
Aug. 1261	writes prayers for ceremonial entry into Constantinople
before Dec. 1262	delivers an oration suggesting that Andronikos be made co-emperor
1262–74	teaches philosophy in Constantinople
late 1260s–early 1270s	restores the Anastasis monastery, Constantinople
1267	punishes Arsenites
1273	takes part in the synodal trial of Bekkos
1274	embassy to council of Lyons
1277	signs Chilandari document
1281/2	embassy to Trebizond
before Dec. 1282	death of Akropolites
1283	the 'work' of Akropolites is burned at the council of Blachernai

THE *HISTORY*

Akropolites' *History*, the basis of all modern reconstructions of the period in 'exile', has always been considered to be an objective and reliable work. Yet this judgement is based on little more than Akropolites' statement of the importance of impartiality, and his eyewitness status for many of the events he

describes.[177] To evaluate the work, attention must be given to its structure and the organization of the narrative, its sources, accuracy, and how it relates to earlier and later works.

In the *prooimion* to his *History*, Akropolites shows his awareness of the long tradition of historical writing to which his work belongs. He describes how history has been written in the past, how his narrative will differ, and he presents his reasons for, as well as his duty in, writing.

Akropolites describes the tradition of Byzantine historical writing in terms of starting points. While others who have written histories began with the creation of the world or with an empire of a people—Persian, Greek or Roman—Akropolites has chosen a different beginning, and this for two reasons: many have already written about the past from the time of the creation and besides, there can be no certainty about the complex events of long ago which these narratives cover.[178]

Akropolites' starting point, on the contrary, will be new, as are the events he commits to writing. It is in the novelty of its content that the utility of his *History* lies. His 'historical composition'[179] is also concerned to set the record straight, to reveal truthfully that which people's talk, 'the indiscriminate flow of vulgar speech', cannot.

Thus, the key element which distinguishes Akropolites' work from that of others, according to his own description, is its starting point. He sees no difference between the works we label as 'world chronicle' and 'classicizing history', apart from their scope or the length of time they cover.[180] Missing from his discussion is any other criterion of classification.

In his concise *prooimion*, Akropolites ends by describing the historian's duty to write not 'out of hatred or goodwill but for the sake of history alone and so that what has been done by some . . . may not be relegated to the depths of oblivion'. These two themes, the importance of impartiality and the preservation of the past from oblivion, are found coupled also in the *prooimia* of Anna Komnene and George Pachymeres, linking these three writers in an unexpected way.[181]

[177] Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* I, 266; Hunger, *Literatur* I, 445 and n. 18; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 28–9; Spyropoulos, *Γεώργιος Ἀκροπολίτης*, 60; Panagiotou, *Γεώργιος Ἀκροπολίτης*, 15. The *History* survives also in an abbreviated version, found in four manuscripts that contain the full version. For the '*Ποίημα χρονικὸν ἡμιτελές*', see Heis. 193–274, and below at §51.5.

[178] §1.

[179] This is a more literal translation of Akropolites' title, *Χρονικὴ Συγγραφή*. See Chon.'s title (1.1), *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις*; also Hunger, *Literatur* I, 443 and n. 7, for versions of Akropolites' title in the manuscript tradition.

[180] That we make a false distinction between 'chronicles' and 'histories' was convincingly and definitively argued by H.-G. Beck, 'Zur byzantinischen "Mönchschronik" ', in *Speculum historiale: Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung. Festschrift K. Adler* (Freiburg and Munich, 1965), 188–97.

[181] Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 65.

Although Akropolites places emphasis on recent events, making his starting point the conquest of Constantinople, to record and explore events over a period of time is not his main concern. Rather, his interest, like that of other Byzantine authors of historical narrative, is in an emperor and the justification of that emperor.[182] Not only is Michael Palaiologos presented as the legitimate and rightful emperor, born to rule the empire, but also the 'empire of Nicaea' is presented as if it were from the start the only legitimate successor to the Byzantine empire at the time of the Fourth Crusade.

Indeed, these two aspects of the *History* indicate that it was written with hindsight after 1261. But to pinpoint the precise time of writing of the *History* is a difficult—not to say, impossible—task. The work of assigning a precise date to the composition of the *History* is also conditioned by the incomplete state of the work we have. The narrative breaks off in mid-sentence, at §89, while Akropolites is describing an occasion in late 1261 on which he was about to deliver an oration before the emperor Michael. Whether or not Akropolites did indeed stop writing at this point, we have a version of the *History* which gives a *terminus post quem* of 1261 for its composition. A work which begins with the Latin conquest of Constantinople and ends with the Byzantine reconquest gives readers a sense of completeness and symmetry and makes the version which has come down to us a plausible whole. However, this version leaves the greater part of Michael's reign unrecounted and, with it also, the greater part of Akropolites' experience as *megas logothetes* untold. For Akropolites died in office and wrote his *History* while still in office, unlike many Byzantine writers of history.[183]

Whether Akropolites intended to end the work in 1261[184] or to include later events in Constantinople cannot be ascertained. Heisenberg postulated that Akropolites left the *History* unfinished, although he intended to continue it to cover events up to the 1280s. For Heisenberg, the lack of revision evident 'on every page' is an indication that the author was not able to return to his work, for whatever reason.[185]

As Heisenberg indicates, there are signs that Akropolites did not manage to revise his text; he makes references to earlier passages in his narrative—'as

[182] See R. Scott, 'The classical tradition in Byzantine historiography', in M. Mullett and R. Scott, ed., *Byzantium and the classical tradition* (Birmingham, 1981), 61–74.

[183] Mullett, 'The "other" in Byzantium', 5–6 and n. 26.

[184] Blum, *Die Chronik*, 22, believes that the work did end in 1261 because, had Akrop. written more extensively about Michael's reign, Pach. would not have narrated the events of that emperor's rule in his work. In his view, Pach. begins his *History* where Akrop. leaves off. However, since Akrop.'s *History* was already in an incomplete state when Skout. wrote (see below, 32, for this) Pach. is unlikely to have had access to a more complete version, whether that version ended in 1261 or some later time.

[185] Heisenberg, 'Studien zu George Akropolites', 464–6.

I mentioned before', 'whom I mentioned above'—which are not substantiated.[186] However, the fact that the *History* ends abruptly, in mid-sentence, implies that the next folio or folios were lost or destroyed. Pachymeres states that the anti-unionists burned Akropolites' 'work' (*σύγγραμμα*) in 1283 at the synod of Blachernai.[187] Although the context makes it clear that these were theological works, writings on the Holy Spirit, this does not exclude the possibility that other works or parts of works were also destroyed, especially those dealing with Arsenite and Union issues.[188] A continuation of the *History* after 1261 would have had to treat both these subjects.

The question whether Akropolites wrote a longer *History*—and how much longer—can only be posed. It is certain only that the *History* was in the same unfinished state when it came into the hands of Skoutariotes who completed it by finishing the last sentence. He stated that Akropolites did indeed read the oration he had prepared for the emperor. His assertion might have been based on inference only or it could have been on first-hand knowledge.[189]

Thus, the *History* in the form in which it has survived ends in 1261, providing a *terminus post quem* of 1261 for its composition. Dates in the 1260s have been advanced as possible times of writing. It has been presumed, for example, that after 1261 Akropolites was relieved of his duties as *megas logothetes* to free him for his teaching duties and that he therefore had relatively more time to devote to writing.[190] However, as the evidence from this period shows, Akropolites was also engaged in other work while he was teaching. Furthermore, he taught into the early 1270s, a longer period of time than was previously thought to be the case.[191]

Another suggestion for dating the composition to the 1260s is based on the significance of certain events in Michael VIII's reign. Prinzing has suggested the date of Michael's excommunication by Arsenios (late 1261), or the date of his absolution by Arsenios' successor, Germanos (1265), as occasions that might have spurred Akropolites to write.[192]

[186] Examples at §28.2, §64.2, §76.6.

[187] Pach. III, 35–7.

[188] Constantinides, *Higher education*, 34 and n. 13, thinks that Akrop.'s '*σύγγραμμα*' is the equivalent of his 'oeuvre'—'most of the works'. The word must, however, be understood in a more limited sense since Pachymeres makes reference to works containing citations from the Fathers and dogma: Pach. III, 35.5–37.10; 36 n. 62.

[189] §89. As a churchman, Skout. shows that he was present on many occasions mentioned by Akrop. For Skout.'s additions to the *History* and his time of writing, see 65–71.

[190] Blum, *Die Chronik*, 19–23.

[191] See above, 12–14.

[192] G. Prinzing, review of W. Blum, *Die Chronik*, in *Orthodoxes Forum* 7 (1993), 121–5, here 121 n. 1.

A date in the 1260s would appear to find support in the *History* itself, in passages where Akropolites uses expressions or images which can be found also in other (datable) texts. Such is the case at §52 when he calls the emperor John Vatatzes 'blessed';[193] at §65, where Michael Palaiologos is described as 'worthy of monarchy';[194] at §68, where Akropolites calls Michael II of Epiros a 'renegade'.[195] In each of these instances another author, writing in the 1260s, provides parallel usage. However, although a specific datable parallel can be found for each example, there could be other examples of the same usage which date from a later time. The authors could have been using expressions which had currency over a period of time not limited to the 1260s.

Other possible indications of Akropolites' time of writing from internal evidence are the author's references to his own day. At §12, in describing the division of lands which Asan made with his brothers John and Peter, he states of Peter's portion: 'these places until now are called "Peter's land"'. A similar reference at §69 relates that the Muslims have been paying tribute to the Tatars 'from that time', that is, from the time of their defeat at the battle of Aksaray until Akropolites' day. However, in neither of the above cases is it possible to find a precise date for 'now'.

More promising as a means of dating the composition of the *History* are Akropolites' characterizations of particular people or groups of people. The Latins are 'the Latin race, which always nurtures a passionate hatred for us ...' (§36). The pope and the Venetians, however, are presented neutrally. No blame is accorded to them for the Fourth Crusade or later events.[196] Of the Latins, it is the 'king of the Franks', Louis IX, who receives the strongest individual condemnation: 'as a fellow-countryman [to Baldwin II], [he] was a great enemy of the Romans ...' (§37). The comment is underscored by its

[193] Akrop. calls John III *makarios* in the context of a criticism of his son: see §52.27. This can be understood as an oblique reference to Vatatzes' local veneration as a saint which was well under way by 1264, when Blemmydes, in his *Autobiographia*, dated to 1264, speaks of 'John the one whom God glorified above many other Emperors': see Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 49 and n. 25; Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 72.

[194] §65.5. Akrop. puts in the mouths of the enemy Turks the admiring expression 'worthy of monarchy' to describe Michael who had taken refuge with them and was fighting in their army. Manuel Holobolos, in an oration of 1265, says of the same episode in Michael's life that he displayed heroic deeds on that occasion so that all knew that 'you ruled as emperor and were monarch [*autokrator*] before you put on the chlamys' (I, 35.4–5). For the date of the oration, see Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople—1261?', 13–41.

[195] Michael II is labelled as such from §68.3 onward in the *History*. Michael VIII uses this term also in his typikon for St Auxentios: 'the renegades who are of the same Roman race as we' (Dmitrievski, *Opisanie*, 794). Dennis argues that the typikon, traditionally thought to date from the 1280s, can be dated to the 1260s on the basis of the address to the (unnamed) patriarch who was recently restored to his throne in Constantinople: trans. G. Dennis, in *Byzantine monastic foundation charters* III, 1214 n. 1 and 1207, 1232–3 (address to the patriarch).

[196] See below, 78–9.

singularity in the *History*. No other person, 'Roman' or foreign, is so labelled. The context of Akropolites' denunciation is the crusade of Gregory IX against John III Vatatzes, declared in 1238. Louis did indeed aid Baldwin II on that occasion but he was not the only western ruler to do so at that time.[197]

Akropolites' characterization of westerners indicates a date for the writing of the *History* in the period after the treaty of Viterbo in 1267. This date suits the negative statement about Louis, as well as the neutral stance with regard to the pope and the Venetians. Louis' brother and inheritor of the kingdom of Sicily, Charles of Anjou, allied with Baldwin II in 1267 to secure the throne of Constantinople for Baldwin but also for the heirs of Charles. At the same time, Michael VIII made a five-year treaty with Venice (1268) and was negotiating with the pope to deflect the planned crusade.[198]

Attempts to date the time of composition of the *History* cannot produce more conclusive results. That Akropolites wrote in Constantinople at the end of his life, and composed a *History* which included events after 1261, cannot be discounted as a possibility.

Organization of the narrative

Akropolites' narrative presentation gives the impression of a well-ordered and balanced account, succinct in its expression and clearly laid out. This effect is created by the two principles of organization which Akropolites follows in his exposition of events: a consistent alternation between events in the 'east' and those in the 'west', and a strict chronological sequence.

From §5 onwards, from the time of the dispersal caused by the conquest of Constantinople, the author divides the narrative between affairs in Asia Minor and the Balkans, using the terms 'the eastern parts' to refer to Anatolia and 'the west' for Latin, Bulgarian, Epirot affairs, as well as for the European territories of the 'empire of Nicaea'.[199] At §37 he explains that his narrative is in keeping with the nature of events: 'Since at that time affairs were in a fragmented state . . . the narrative also must twist along in a complex manner.' Akropolites does not diverge from this pattern.

[197] See §37.3.

[198] For these events see D. M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* (Cambridge, 1988), 188–209; Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus*, 197–228. In 1269 and 1270, Michael VIII sent two embassies to Louis IX, seeking his intervention with Rome in union negotiations, in the hope that Louis would prevent Charles' attack on the empire. Louis' death in 1270 in Tunis brought Michael's plans to nothing: M. Dabrowska, 'L'attitude pro-byzantine de saint Louis', *BSl* 50 (1989), 11–23.

[199] For these expressions, adopted also by other thirteenth-century writers, see the commentary at §4.4 and §43.2.

His other ordering principle, that of chronology, is likewise clearly delineated. He relates events in a chronological sequence with little deviation. He sometimes goes back in time to bring affairs up to date—'But something else happened before this' (§24); or 'But let the narrative concerning these matters wait here, while earlier events hold forth, so that the account of the history can proceed in sequence' (§65)—or to fill in the background to his discussion—'But so that my history may be intelligible to all, it is necessary to say a few things by way of introduction' (§11). Transitional sentences guide the reader: 'The account will relate what happened after this at the appropriate time'(§13).

Akropolites' method is so dependably regular that any change stands out. He introduces variation in two ways. He interrupts an account of an event—in a technique akin to the newsflash—to insert himself into the narrative at the chronologically correct time, placing himself within the stream of events at the appropriate point. This has the effect of drawing his readers' attention all the more to what he has to say. Thus it is that his accounts of John III's expedition to Rhodes (§28–§30) and of a marriage alliance made by the same emperor and Asan (§31–§33) include insertions of autobiographical information: 'It was at that time also that I...' (§29; §32). Akropolites' life is introduced 'wherever it is appropriate' (§32). Another way in which he varies the pattern is by slowing down the pace of the narrative by going into greater detail about events he participated in or considered particularly important. This occurs from §43 (1246) onward, but especially from the reign of Theodore II. Both kinds of variation strike the reader, interrupting as they do the regular rhythm of the narrative. The occasions for these changes often have to do with George Akropolites or with Michael Palaiologos.[200]

Sources

Akropolites lived from 1233 in the 'empire of Nicaea' and was therefore also his own source for many of the events he records. From 1246 he accompanied the emperors John and Theodore on their campaigns in the 'west'. His participation in those campaigns is discernible in his narrative not only from his personal interventions but also from the greater degree of detail and the much longer narrative he provides.[201] However, for the earlier years, those before he was born and while he was growing up in Constantinople, for 1203–33, Akropolites was evidently partly or wholly dependent on other

[200] See, e.g. §63, §65, §89; below, 43–6.

[201] To the 25 years from 1246–61 he devotes 110 pages of Heisenberg's edition, whereas to the previous 42 years, 76 pages.

sources. To some of these he makes reference. It is especially in the part of his narrative before 1246 that he occasionally indicates that his knowledge derives from unspecified others: 'they say' or 'some say'. 'They' are 'those who heard', 'those who were there', eyewitnesses who transmitted accounts.[202] Such explicit references to other sources become less frequent as Akropolites becomes more involved in events, from 1254 (§52). When mention is made to a source in this part of the narrative, it is often oral.[203]

But beyond these allusions Akropolites gives no help to those who want to know about his sources and how he used them. Any attempt to discover what these might be is frustrated by the little available to us in comparison with what Akropolites had at his disposal. For the entire period which his *History* covers there is only one other extant historical narrative he might have drawn from, Niketas Choniates' *Chronike diegesis*, a work Choniates continued and revised at Nicaea where he lived the last years of his life, writing orations for the emperor Theodore I.[204] It serves the modern historian as the main narrative for the early years covered by Akropolites' *History*, from 1203–6, and also for events from the 1180s which Akropolites discusses briefly.

But did Choniates' *History*, in the versions[205] we have today, serve Akropolites? It seems not. The authors differ on points of substance on the early years of the 'Second Bulgarian Empire', the 1190/1 expedition of Isaac II, and the reception of the sultan Kaykhusraw by Alexios III.[206] Concerning the conquest of Constantinople, the authors coincide on details—the 'favourable winds' which brought the armies to Constantinople—but differ on the date of the fall of the city and on who the guilty parties were.[207] The 'favourable winds' are mentioned also in two western texts and in an oration by Chrysoberges.[208] Thus, we can be sure that this point was of sufficient prominence to warrant its repetition. Such could also be the case with another detail mentioned both by Akropolites and Choniates, without a necessary borrowing of the one from the other—the ruse by which the Latins escaped at night from the battle of Adrianople (1205).[209]

More compelling are the parallels in the authors' descriptions of the battle at Antioch-on-the-Maeander (1211). Choniates' account, an oration

[202] See at §2.14, §4.2, §5.7, §5.10, §8.2, §10.3, §13.10, §13.19, §15.1, 4, 9, §23.12, §25.5, §34, §37, §39.1, §41, §42, §52.13, §61.4, §65.9, §74.5, §74.14.

[203] The cases at §65.9; §74.5 certainly are.

[204] J.-L. van Dieten, 'Noch einmal über Niketas Choniates', *BZ* 57 (1964), 302–28, here 315–16; van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 44–51.

[205] See van Dieten, *Historia*, xciii–xcix.

[206] §8.19, §11.4, §11.7, §11.12, §11.14, §12.3.

[207] See below, 78–9.

[208] §2.10. See also Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 143–4.

[209] §13.11.

he delivered before Theodore I Laskaris, makes use of cross imagery in allusion to Constantine the Great but also in a comparison of Theodore with Christ.[210] This latter theme, already well developed in the twelfth century for Manuel Komnenos, is taken even further by Choniates for Theodore, whose wounds from the battle are called *stigmata*, while his victory is his 'by the sign of the cross . . . which you enjoin your soldiers to wear as an ensign'.[211] Akropolites appears to have drawn on this oration when he makes reference to 'the Lord Christ whose name we pious people bear as an ensign or seal' and likewise when he describes how the emperor stood again, after a blow from the sultan, 'as if strengthened by a divine force'.[212] Akropolites does not often speak of God in his *History*[213] but in his account of the battle he mentions Him twice. This could be a reflection of the language of his source. Yet is that source Choniates' oration? The authors differ on two main points. Only Akropolites mentions Alexios III's involvement and Kaykhusraw's use of him for his own ends.[214] The authors likewise differ on the central issue of the decapitation of the sultan. Choniates, writing for Theodore, states that the emperor did the deed.[215] Akropolites claims that no one knows who did it.[216] Although the different audiences of the authors could account for their differing accounts, it is also the case that Akropolites could have had another source at his disposal when writing about the battle, namely the newsletters Theodore is said to have sent everywhere to announce his victory over the Turks.[217] Indeed, these may have been his only source, for the element common to Choniates and Akropolites, the wearing of the 'sign of the cross', was of sufficient importance and singularity to warrant mention by all authors writing about the battle. The unprecedented event would have been well publicized, since Theodore had large numbers of Latins in his army who fought the Muslims in the way they were accustomed to, under the sign of the cross.[218] Thus, similarities in content, and even in language, between

[210] *Orationes*, 170–5; Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 276, 280 and n. 52.

[211] *Orationes*, 175.4–6 (cross); 175.17–21 (*stigmata*).

[212] At §9.8, §10.3. Compare with Chon., *Orationes*, 172.3–5: *Χριστὸν αὐτὸν συμπαρεστῶτα εἶχες καὶ ἀνορθοῦντα καὶ ἀνιστῶντά σε*.

[213] See below, 54–5.

[214] See the commentary at §10.9 for Skout.'s addition.

[215] *Orationes*, 171.22–172.18.

[216] See §10.6.

[217] Letter of the emperor Henry, 'Der Brief', ed. Prinzing, 414.83–415: *acrior et elatior factus misit litteras ad omnes Grecorum provincias*. See also §10. On the significance of newsletters see McCormick, *Eternal victory*, 191–2.

[218] Another unusual measure for the benefit of the Latin soldiers of Theodore's army is an act of the patriarch Michael Autoreianos in which he undertakes to forgive the sins of those who die in war fighting on behalf of the salvation of the people and the fatherland. See Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 119.70–4; 131–5.

Akropolites and Choniates, cannot be sure signs of direct borrowing, when so much else has been lost.[219]

In other parts of the *History* Akropolites appears to have letters, treaties or other documents as his source. Although he was himself responsible for writing newsletters and drawing up treaties, nowhere in his *History* does he include an entire document.[220] However, in some cases he does appear to paraphrase or summarize letters or treaties. That his narrative reproduces the language or the main points of a document can be ascertained from instances in which he asserts that he is drawing from statements made by individuals. In these cases texts associated with the same individuals survive which can be compared with Akropolites' account. At §17 the statement of the inhabitants of Constantinople to the emperor Henry is reported by Akropolites: 'you rule over our bodies, but certainly not our spirits and souls'. These words are similar to the message conveyed in the letter to pope Innocent III by the clergy in the capital. At §21 the author reports Chomatenos' affirmation of his position: 'as he said, he was independent and was not obliged to give account of his actions to anyone, and for this reason had the authority to anoint emperors—whomever, wherever and whenever he wished'. This statement, as reported by Akropolites, conveys the same defiant spirit as Chomatenos' letter to the patriarch Germanos, a letter which makes the same points as Akropolites but at greater length. Although the letter may not have been Akropolites' source, the resemblance in tone and attitude expressed confirms the accuracy of Akropolites' account. At §26, the author relates that the ambassador sent by John III to Manuel Angelos mocked the latter, saying that the hymn for Christ was more apt for him, 'the *basileus* and *despotes*'. The ambassador was Christopher of Ankyra whose correspondence with Asan reveals his use of this very phrase to refer to Manuel. Likewise, at §27, Akropolites relates that John of Brienne made an agreement with the Latin barons of Constantinople. The agreement survives and a comparison with Akropolites' account shows that he accurately conveys the main points of the pact. Furthermore, the agreement included a provision concerning the reconquest of lands in Asia Minor. Akropolites states that king John 'declared that those people were very wrong who said that he would arrive in lands where the man who ruled as emperor did not know how to govern . . .'. John's statement is not otherwise attested but is identifiable as a Latin argument or excuse in support of the right to conquer Byzantine lands. Villehardouin gives a similar justification for the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204.[221] Furthermore, the convoluted

[219] See Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 141–50, esp. 148–50.

[220] Here he differs greatly from Anna Komnene. See Howard-Johnston, 'Anna Komnene and the *Alexiad*', 278–9.

[221] See §27.6–7. Vill. §224: *que cil qui tel murtre faisoit n'avoit droit en terre tenir. . . .*

nature of the sentence strengthens the impression that Akropolites is paraphrasing or translating his source.[222]

Accuracy and reliability

Whether the documents and letters discussed here were actually Akropolites' sources or not, the coincidence of information provided by those texts and by the *History* helps us to form a judgement of the *History* as an accurate and reliable account of events. Akropolites' dependability extends to the affairs of the Bulgarians, the Latins and the Turks for events before his time, as well as during.[223]

His accuracy applies also to his use of titles at the appropriate time, when the title was in use. His reliability on this matter is related to his strong sense of chronology.[224] The reference to Theodore II as 'emperor' for the first time at §34 is a prime example. Akropolites' ascription of the title to Theodore has been overlooked or has been considered a slip on his part because both Pachymeres and Gregoras state explicitly that Theodore 'did not have the title of emperor', 'was not proclaimed emperor' while John III was alive. Furthermore, Blemmydes never refers to Theodore as such.[225] However, the evidence from the *History*, together with other independent sources, both Latin and Greek, leaves no doubt that Theodore was proclaimed co-emperor at least from the time of his betrothal to Helen in 1234.[226] An early indication that this was the case comes from Aubry who states for the year 1241 that the 'Constantinopolitani' made treaties with Kaliman, son of Asan, and with the emperor John 'and his son'.[227] The inclusion of the emperor's son shows that he was co-emperor. In the verse introduction to his collection of Theodore II's letters, made sometime before 1254, Akropolites refers to Theodore as 'emperor'.[228] Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid, in an oration for the emperor John written sometime after his victory on Rhodes in 1249/50, states that Theodore was 'proclaimed emperor of the Romans' and 'held the sceptre in reality'.[229] Theodore II, in a letter to the metropolitan of Ephesos, Nikephoros,

[222] See above, 8 n. 26.

[223] For examples, see at §8.5, 19, 20; §64; §65; §73.2; §85.3 and below, 89–90, 90–2, 92–4.

[224] See below, 41–2.

[225] Pach. I, 61.20–1; Greg. I, 53.2–3; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 23.

[226] The date of the betrothal is problematic. See §31. In his account of the betrothal he refers to Helen as *despoina* (§34), a word used to refer to the emperor's wife. See, however, Akrop.'s funeral oration for John III, in which he asks rhetorically, 'Did he [Theodore] not rule with his father from birth?': *Opera* II, 26.13–14.

[227] Aubry, 950.23–4.

[228] Heis., *Opera* II, 8.19–20. See also n. 41 above.

[229] Ed. Mercati, I, 91.15–16.

refers to himself as emperor while his father is still alive: '... my Majesty saw in advance your letter to ... my holy lord and emperor ...'.[230] In 1254 Akropolites states that the *emperor* Theodore was 'acclaimed *monarch* [*autokrator*] by all' (§53), and upon his death in 1258, he states that Theodore 'had not yet reigned as monarch [*autokrator*] four whole years' (§74). There can therefore be no doubt that Theodore was co-emperor with John III and that Akropolites introduced the title of emperor for Theodore into his narrative at the chronologically correct point.

The same meticulous attention to titles can also be demonstrated in other cases. At §46 Akropolites refers to Michael II of Epiros as 'despot' for the first time, in relating the events of 1246, years before the marriage alliance between Nikephoros and Maria (1248/50) which is traditionally thought to have been the occasion for the bestowal of the title of despot on Michael. Yet the date of 1246 seems to be corroborated by a document of that year.[231] Another example of Akropolites' use of appropriate names or epithets at the chronologically correct point is his reference to Michael as a 'renegade' (§68) and to his hostile actions as 'revolt' (§49). Although relations between Michael II and Nicaea were on the whole more inimical than friendly, it is only from 1248/50 that Akropolites speaks of Michael in this manner, for it was only after Michael was appointed a despot and recognized as such by the emperor at Nicaea that his behaviour could be described as rebellion.

Although Akropolites is precise in his *History* and even meticulous in many respects, his reliability is questionable in his characterizations and pronouncements on various individuals. This is true of Constantine Margarites who receives a particularly long and strong condemnation, 'a peasant born of peasants, reared on barley and bran and knowing only how to grunt' (§60),[232] of the *skouterios* Xyleas, 'well named, by Themis' (§66), of the *protosebastos* Manuel Laskaris, 'an utter simpleton who scarcely knew how to command' (§60), of the group of men with whom Akropolites was promoted, 'pitiful men worth no more than three obols' (§60), and of the patriarch Arsenios (§53, §84, §88).[233] Akropolites' judgement on them is distorted by their loyalty to Theodore II[234] and by his alignment with Michael Palaiologos. Men favoured by Theodore are denounced by Akropolites who

[230] *Epistulae*, 148.17–149.23.

[231] See discussion of this problem at §46.9 and below, 97. For another example of accurate reporting of titles, see below, 96–7.

[232] See below, 99 for the way in which Akropolites' description has misled historians.

[233] For Akrop.'s criticism of all these men, see also the influence of Blemmydes on him, below, 47–51. For the promoted men, see above, 24–6.

[234] Pach. I, 113, shows that Manuel, unlike his brother Michael Laskaris, was not a supporter of Michael Palaiologos who put him under strict guard at Prousa in 1258. This was one measure among many Michael VIII took to weaken the opposition to him.

expresses his distance from, and his disdain for, those who were in many cases not unlike him.[235] By contrast, he shows a strong inclination in favour of Michael Palaiologos and all his relations, including Alexios III and Eirene, wife of John III.[236] In this respect Akropolites was not true to the principle he expressed in his *prooimion*: 'the author ought to write neither with favour nor with malice, nor out of hatred or goodwill but for the sake of history alone....'

Names and naming

Akropolites gives particular names or withholds them to show his attitude toward a person or to make a point about his authority. His care in this area is related to his interest in titles and to official usage.

Of all the rulers mentioned in the *History*, only those in the 'empire of Nicaea' are always named 'emperor' or 'monarch' (*autokrator*). Other rulers are mentioned by name only[237] or with a phrase denoting the limits of their power—'the emperor of the city of Constantinople, Robert' (§24), 'the emperor of the Bulgarians' (§20, §24). John II Asan appears as '*autokrator*' once in Akropolites' narrative, in the company of another *autokrator*, John III, with whom he had made a marriage alliance (§34). This title, exceptionally bestowed on a foreign ruler, is accompanied by an equally surprising obituary notice of Asan, describing him as 'compassionate'.[238]

Alexios III, but not Alexios IV or Alexios V, is called 'emperor', an indication that Akropolites considered only Alexios III to be the legitimate emperor. This interpretation of his use of the title for Alexios III alone is supported by Akropolites' interest in Alexios after he fled Constantinople and until he was taken captive by Theodore I at the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander.[239]

Akropolites gives Michael I of Epiros no surname. Although he was a Komnenos Doukas, he was an illegitimate son of the *sebastokrator* John Doukas.[240] Akropolites calls his brother, Theodore, Komnenos until his downfall at the battle of Klokotnitza; thereafter he is known as Angelos, a name with less prestige.[241] Those who break away from the authority of the

[235] See above, 24–7.
[236] See below, 57, 79–81, for the preferment he gives them. For other relations, see at §36.5; also below, 53 n. 330, 55, 58.
[237] E.g. 'Asan': §34, §36, §39.
[238] §34: 'the marriage connection of the two monarchs'; at §39.13. See below, 91–2.
[239] See below, 79–81, on this emperor.
[240] §8.12. For variations on ways of referring to Michael I, see Nicol, 'The prosopography of the Byzantine aristocracy', 79–91, here 82.
[241] See the discussion at §25.

emperors at Nicaea are labelled 'rebels' and 'renegades', that is, Leo Gabalas of Rhodes and Michael II of Epiros.[242]

Dating and chronology

Akropolites has a strong sense of chronology which is evident from the way he inserts accounts of himself into the narrative at the correct time,[243] from his attribution of titles and dignities at the chronologically appropriate point,[244] and from the chronological sequence in which the narrative of the *History* is organized, with few gaps[245] and few flashbacks.[246] He guides the reader with phrases indicating time, 'many days had not passed', 'about this time', 'a short time later'.[247]

However, his sense of chronology is not accompanied by the provision of precise dates. Like most Byzantine writers of history he gives few.[248] When he does, he uses a variety of means of dating: the year since the creation of the world,[249] the month and day,[250] the Roman calendar (kalends),[251] the Athenian calendar,[252] feast days,[253] and seasons.[254]

More common than dates are the phrases indicating time, such as 'about this time', 'a short time later', 'not long after'. While these expressions help to orientate readers, they also cause problems in dating events mentioned in the narrative because of their imprecise nature. What constitutes a 'short' or a 'long' time for Akropolites is open to interpretation. Unless there is another source for the same event which can provide an indication of the date,[255] many events can never be assigned more than an approximate time based on their position in the narrative sequence.[256] It follows that dates given by

[242] §28.3 and §68.3.

[243] See §29, §32.

[244] See above, 39–40.

[245] The largest gap is at §42 (1243) to §43 (1246).

[246] But see §11–12, §15.

[247] In a few instances, he states a specific length of time: 2 years at §7, §22, §27; 4 months at §30.

[248] Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen*, 309 n. 74, comments that although Akrop. likes to give his age at specific points in his narrative, he is otherwise sparing in relating the time when events took place.

[249] §4, §41, §85 (with indiction).

[250] §43, §85, §88.

[251] §52.

[252] §43.

[253] Christmas: §60, §84; Epiphany: §60, §84; Palm Sunday: §52; the Resurrection: §52, §84; the Transfiguration: §63.

[254] §41, §61, §67, §80, §83, §84.

[255] For the rare examples of other sources that provide secure dating, see, e.g., §36.4, §39.12, §47.

[256] Such is the case with Andronikos Palaiologos' death. He was appointed to command in Thessalonike in December 1246 but 'lived a short time longer'. This phrase has been interpreted to mean that he died by 1247. However, a funeral oration by Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid, together with a manuscript note of October 1248, shows that Andronikos was still alive in 1248. See the discussion at §46.6.

modern historians on the basis of Akropolites' imprecise descriptions of time are insecure and all the more so when they are assigned without a discussion of the reasons for them.

However, position in the narrative is not always a certain guide in dating events accurately. Readers tend to assume that narrative sequence and chronological sequence are identical, that if one event follows another in the *History*, the second event must have taken place later. Yet, sometimes, the event mentioned later is part of the previously narrated one, an expansion on it and a further elaboration of it. An example of this is at §16, on the emperor Henry's conquest of Lentiana and Poimanenon, traditionally dated to a time after his 1211 campaign recounted at §15. The conquest of these towns is, however, part of the same campaign and is described by Akropolites as an illustration of the Latin emperor's gracious behaviour to the Romans.[257] Akropolites' expansions on events can thus also slow down the chronological progression, marking time.

Narrative sequence and time also become disjointed when Akropolites goes back in time to bring affairs on one or the other front, east or west, up to date. So, at §22, Akropolites relates the battle between John III and the Latins which occurred at the beginning of his reign, two years after he came to the throne. Although he describes these events after his account of the conquest of Thessalonike by Theodore Komnenos Doukas (§21: 1224), the battle at Poimanenon took place before that conquest. He is bringing events in the east up to date with those in the west.[258]

Content

The narrative which Akropolites disposes in this strictly alternating and chronological sequence is one concerned almost exclusively with battles and military expeditions. Akropolites says little about administration, and what he does say is related to his own work as imperial secretary.[259] He gives no reference to legislation or justice—apart from the trial of Michael Palaiologos.[260] He says nothing about patronage, foundations of churches or

[257] A misunderstanding of Akrop.'s narrative sequence at this point has led also to prosopographical confusion and to the overall assessment of Akrop.'s work as unreliable on early events. For this criticism see Langdon, 'Backgrounds to the rise of the Vatatzai', 183 and n. 58; also Cheynet and Vannier, *Études prosopographiques*, no. 30, 172–4.

[258] See also §42.

[259] We learn about Demetrios Tornikes' central role in John III's administration as background to the information about Akrop.'s chancery duties: see at §49.19, 21.

[260] §50.

monasteries, charitable acts, although, or perhaps because, John III excelled in this area.[261] The orthodoxy of the emperors at Nicaea is not a subject for comment in Akropolites' overview of their reigns.[262] Ecclesiastical matters and controversies likewise play a small part in the narrative of the *History*.[263] This is the case even though the thirteenth century saw many discussions about union with representatives of the Latin church.[264] Akropolites conveys nothing about life in Asia Minor, apart from the emperor's movements back and forth from Pegai-Lampsakos to Nymphaion.[265] He expresses contempt for those who had an Anatolian upbringing.[266] The one non-military subject handled in some detail is education, Akropolites' education. It would be an accurate assessment of the *History* to say that, with the exception of war, the matters we learn most about are those that are introduced because they have to do with the author's life.

The degree to which the *History* is autobiographical is one of the most striking aspects of the work. The space Akropolites devotes to himself in the *History* is large enough to make him, along with Michael Psellos and Anna Komnene, the most intrusive of Byzantine historians.[267]

A study of authors' interventions in historical narratives shows that the intrusions differ in nature and purpose for individual authors.[268] Akropolites, like other Byzantine writers of history, does not appear to have been interested in providing autobiographical information for its own sake when he inserted himself into his narrative. As an account of his life, the information he gives is not full enough to produce a *curriculum vitae*.[269] Again, like other authors of historical narrative, Akropolites does not bring himself into his text in order to show his credentials for writing the history. Were this a motive, one would expect direct reference to his presence on particular occasions as a confirmation of his eyewitness status. Yet Akropolites does not always mention his

[261] John the 'Almsgiver': see below, 57–8; Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the Palaiologan period', 69–71.

[262] See *Kaiserkritik*, below, 55–65.

[263] Exceptions are his discussion of Pelagius' visit to Constantinople in 1213–15 (§17), his mention of his dismissal of the papal legates in 1256 in Thessaly (§67), and his longer than usual account of the problems associated with Arsenios' succession (§84).

[264] Angold, *Church and society*, 505–29. See Richter, 'Des Georgios Akropolites Gedanken über Theologie, Kirche und Kircheneinheit', 277–99, esp. 279, who sees in Akrop.'s lack of discussion of ecclesiastical issues an improvement on Chon.'s *History*.

[265] Below, 87–8; §41.

[266] Above, 24, 40; at §60.3.

[267] Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen*, 309–15, estimates that one third of the *History* is autobiographical.

[268] Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen, passim*; Macrides, 'The historian in the history', 205–24.

[269] See, e.g., the discussion of his titles, above, 19–20.

presence on specific occasions and campaigns. The reader is left to infer from the amount and type of detailed information given that the author is his own source for what he relates. This point is nowhere better illustrated than in Akropolites' account of the booty which the Bulgarians took from the imperial baggage in the disastrous campaign of Isaac II in 1190/1 (§11). He lists imperial crowns, vessels, money and the imperial cross which contained relics. Choniates makes no mention of these objects. Akropolites' source for the items would remain unknown were it not for Skoutariotes who reveals that on the feast days of Christmas and Epiphany the Bulgarian rulers exhibit the 'imperial standards' they had taken as booty from the emperor Isaac. He inserts this information into Akropolites' narrative of his embassy to the Bulgarian ruler in the winter of 1260/1.[270] Constantine Tich had asked Akropolites to observe with his court the festivities of those holy days. The ambassador must have seen the booty at Trnovo.[271]

Akropolites' insertions of himself, therefore, do not have to do with his method or his credentials for writing history. Rather, almost all of his first-person interventions are concerned with relating his conversations with emperors, John III, his wife the empress Eirene, Theodore II, and Michael VIII. The conversations provide him with the opportunity to display his standing with the emperors at Nicaea. They convey information about his education, his knowledge, his functions. They show him to be close to the rulers. Under John III he was one of a group of young men educated at the emperor's expense (§32). He was able to converse with the empress Eirene and the *aktouarios* Nicholas whom the empress respected greatly but whom Akropolites showed to be less knowledgeable than he (§39). In 1252 he was asked by John III to judge Michael Palaiologos at his trial (§50). Akropolites overheard a conversation between the emperor's right-hand man, the metropolitan Phokas, and Michael; he had insider's information. In 1256 Theodore II singled out Akropolites for his opinion on the reliability of a report concerning a peace treaty made with the Bulgarian ruler (§63). In 1257 Theodore II asked Akropolites what Michael Palaiologos was thinking, what the motives of his actions were (§64). In these instances also Akropolites shows himself to have insider's knowledge or to be perceived as a person who does.[272]

[270] Akrop. §84; Skout. 547.25–548.2: *βασιλικὰ σημεῖα*.

[271] Akrop. would have had another opportunity to see the objects in Constantinople in 1279 when John III Asan fled from Trnovo to Constantinople bringing these with him: Pach. II, 567.25–569.21.

[272] These first-person interventions, Akrop.'s conversations with emperors, contrast in significance and length with the smaller number of speeches Akrop. puts into the mouths of others. See below, 51. Of these few speeches, one is by Andronikos and two are by Michael Palaiologos.

All these passages which represent Akropolites' insertions into his narrative serve to underline the high regard in which he was held by the emperors at Nicaea, demonstrated by the education they provided for him, the important functions they gave him, the promotions they bestowed on him, and the intimate information they sought from him. His insertions give evidence of his qualities but also serve to characterize the emperors themselves. They display Eirene's imperial bearing and respect for learned men, John III's lack of judgement in his choice of advisor and in setting up an investigation of Michael Palaiologos, Theodore II's instability, Michael Palaiologos' nobility of character. Akropolites was witness to these qualities and characteristics and gave an account of them through his 'autobiographical' insertions.

First-person intrusions link Akropolites with earlier writers of history, but another quality of his writing also connects him with past writers, that is, his ability to portray a scene vividly, to convey realistic details of experience and, especially, of human physiology. Thus, William of Achaia's protruding front teeth gave away his hiding place in a hay stack at the 'battle of Pelagonia' (§81). The smoke from camp fires caused men to weep 'although not tears of sorrow' (§59). In other passages the author's observations show a debt to medical knowledge. The injuries to Anselm of Cahieu's neck (§24) and to Demetrios Angelos' bottom (§42) had long-term effects. But it is especially in his description of John III's illness and death that Akropolites demonstrates familiarity with technical medical language in conveying symptoms, diagnosis and treatment (§52). Elsewhere too in the *History* Akropolites gives the precise name of the disease.[273] His medical language finds parallels in the twelfth-century *Timarion*,[274] whose author is only one example of the twelfth-century fashion for medicine which is revealed both in literature and in practice.[275]

Influences on Akropolites

Akropolites' writing shows that he owes much to the twelfth century and has an affinity with pre-1204 literary culture.[276] In particular, it is with Anna

[273] §13.19, §59.3. Blum, *Die Chronik*, 37–8.

[274] See §52.8. For parallels with other twelfth-century writers see §29.4.

[275] Anna Komnene and Manuel I Komnenos both had practical medical knowledge which they applied. See Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 361–6; Magdalino, 'The literary perception of everyday life in Byzantium: some general considerations and the case of John Apokaukos', 28–38; Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, 210–30.

[276] See the general comments of Browning on the prestige which twelfth-century culture enjoyed at Nicaea: 'a kind of surrogate for the reestablishment of political power': R. Browning, 'The language of Byzantine literature', in S. Vryonis, Jr., ed., *The past in medieval and modern Greek culture* (Malibu, 1978), 103–33, here 124 (repr. in R. Browning, *History, language and literature in the Byzantine world* (Northampton, 1989), no. xv).

Komnene that he shares traits. These are: the common themes of their *prooimia* and the great emphasis on war in their narratives; the lack of 'ethnographic digressions';[277] the descriptions which reflect medical knowledge; and the insertions of the author into the text. These similarities give Akropolites a literary context.

But Akropolites is connected to the twelfth century also through his teacher, the monk Nikephoros Blemmydes, the most famous intellectual in the 'empire of Nicaea', whose life and work bridge twelfth-century Constantinople and the Palaiologan period. Blemmydes' influence on his well-known student, who admired him and took pride in having studied with him,[278] can be detected and traced. The writing of autobiography and knowledge of medicine are two areas they had in common. Blemmydes composed in 1264 an autobiographical preface to the typikon for the monastery he founded at Ephesos, a preface so extensive that it can be read as a self-contained account of the founder's life.[279] In this *Diegesis merike*, Blemmydes gives ample evidence of medical knowledge, providing gruesome details of bodily functions and revealing also that his father was a doctor and that he himself studied medicine for seven years.[280]

The 'autobiographical urge'[281] and knowledge of medicine are common to Blemmydes and Akropolites but also to the times in which they lived. However, the direct influence of Blemmydes on Akropolites is discernible in other areas—in social and moral attitudes, ideas on education, certain stylistic features and common expressions[282]—even if Akropolites does not directly acknowledge the source of that influence.[283]

A striking coincidence of views is exhibited by both men with regard to particular churchmen. Church matters make an appearance in the *History* almost exclusively in the form of the names and the sequence of patriarchs, and a brief comment on each man. For four of the nine patriarchs at Nicaea from 1208–61, Akropolites' remarks concern their education. This is the case

[277] Howard-Johnston, 'Anna Komnene and the *Alexiad*', 260–302, here 271–5 (war), 297 (ethnographic descriptions). Akrop. has one ethnographic description, that of the Cumans crossing the Danube: §35.

[278] In addition to the references in his *History*, at §32, §39, §53, Akropolites refers to his teacher in his commentary on Gregory Nazianzenos: Heis., *Opera* II, 71.1–8.

[279] J. A. Munitiz, 'Hagiographical autobiography in the 13th century', *BSl* 53 (1992), 243–9.

[280] *Autobiographia* I, §56; II, §85; I, §5; see Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 3–10, for autobiography. See also the *History*, §52.

[281] This phrase is borrowed from M. Angold, 'The autobiographical impulse in Byzantium', *DOP* 52 (1998), 225–57. For his discussion of Blemmydes, see 246–51.

[282] For examples of common expressions, see §32.4, §45.3, §60.12.

[283] The young student attributes his knowledge to his teacher at §39 in his explanation of the causes of a solar eclipse.

for Michael Autoreianos (§7), Methodios (§42), Manuel II (§51), and Arsenios (§53, §84). Of these, only Michael Autoreianos, who lived before Akropolites, meets with his approval. For the others, Akropolites expresses the disdain of a man educated at the highest level towards those who were not.[284] Such comments on patriarchs' education are not unusual in the authors of historical narratives. In Akropolites' instance, however, there is more to the criticism than snobbery. Blemmydes was involved with Methodios, Manuel II and Arsenios, each in a different, unhappy way. Blemmydes had been suggested for the vacancy which Methodios filled.[285] He was asked to act as a mentor to Manuel II,[286] and had been the prime candidate for the throne Arsenios occupied.[287] Blemmydes had strong views on each man which may have influenced Akropolites' judgement.

The patriarch Manuel II is a case in point. Akropolites' unfavourable comment on him appears to relate specifically to Blemmydes' encounter with the man and to the latter's opinion of Manuel. In the *Diegesis merike* where Blemmydes never refers to Manuel by name, but uses periphrastic expressions, so great was his dislike of him,[288] he reveals that the emperor had asked him to act as 'mentor' to the new patriarch,[289] a claim which seems to support Akropolites' comments on Manuel's lack of education. Blemmydes discusses at length an incident in which the patriarch wrongly interpreted a sermon by Blemmydes, judging it to be a 'slur upon the Son'. This was 'not so much . . . a judgement of biblical scholarship taken by men skilled in the interpretation of the word of truth, as . . . the naive opinion of men reputed for their holiness'.[290] Akropolites may be commenting on this very episode when he says of Manuel, he 'had no experience of letters, nor was [he] able to unravel the meaning of what he read' (§51).[291]

Arsenios receives the greatest attention of all the patriarchs in the *History*.[292] Akropolites presents him as an undistinguished monk with little education who was successful in attaining the patriarchal throne only because Blemmydes, everyone's first choice, proved difficult to persuade. Both Theodore II and Blemmydes were wary: the emperor, because rulers want 'submissive' men who 'succumb easily to their wishes'; Blemmydes,

[284] R. Browning, 'Literacy in the Byzantine world', *BMGS* 4 (1978), 39–54, esp. 39–40. Cf. Richter, 'Des Georgios Akropolites Gedanken über Theologie, Kirche und Kircheneinheit', 277–9.

[285] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §69. [286] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §69.

[287] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §80.

[288] Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 38, 119 n. 85.

[289] *Autobiographia* I, §69, p. 35.11–18: ἡμᾶς εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ παιδαγωγίαν . . . .

[290] *Autobiographia* II, §67–74, pp 76–9; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 129 n. 123.

[291] But see Theodore II's letter to Manuel praising his style: *Epistulae*, 131.30–6; Constantinides, *Higher education*, 22–3.

[292] §53; §84.6, 7; §88.2, 13.

because his observation of the emperor's character made him reluctant. Akropolites and Blemmydes held almost identical views with regard to the man and the election.[293]

By contrast, two patriarchs at Nicaea, Germanos II (§42) and Nikephoros (§84), are judged on the grounds of their piety and demeanour rather than their education and knowledge. Akropolites finds Nikephoros to be 'a most chaste and moderate man in speech and manner', while Germanos 'lived a good and holy life'. These men are well liked also by Blemmydes (I, §69, I, §68).

Thus, Akropolites' statements about patriarchs are coloured by Blemmydes' own views and experiences. Even his comment about the kinds of patriarchs emperors like, submissive uneducated men who do not oppose them, twice made,[294] is more likely to be specific to Blemmydes' experience than the generalization it purports to be.

Blemmydes expresses strong feelings also about Marchesina, describing a notorious episode in which she figured in two passages of the *Diegesis merike* and in a separate publication, an 'Open Letter'.[295] Marchesina, the empress's rival and John III's lover, made a noisy entrance into the monastery on the outskirts of Ephesos where Blemmydes was officiating, 'with a great retinue and much display, rushing into the church while the holy . . . sacrament was being celebrated'.[296] Blemmydes stopped the service and she was forced to withdraw. The incident is not reported as such by Akropolites. Yet in his obituary for the emperor John, Akropolites mentions for the first and only time the latter's second wife, Constanza-Anna, daughter of Frederick II, only to discuss her 'attendant' Marchesina, whom he describes in similar fashion to Blemmydes, emphasizing the emperor's passion for her and the privileges he bestowed on her because of this (§52).

Two people with whom Akropolites had greater contact and who do not receive positive portrayals in the *History*, Theodore II and George Mouzalon, also appear, from the *Diegesis merike*, not to have been held in high regard by Blemmydes. Theodore II was a pupil of Blemmydes and a warm correspondence between them survives,[297] yet in the *Diegesis merike* Blemmydes is full of criticism and opposition to the emperor. He states that he was reluctant to accept the appointment to the patriarchate because of the emperor Theodore's character, his 'youth, temper and stubbornness',[298] a characterization

[293] For the encomiastic literature on Arsenios, see Skout., below, 69 and Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the Palaiologan period', 73–9.

[294] §42, §53. Greg. I, 292.5–9, makes the same comment.

[295] *Autobiographia* I, §70–2; II, §49; Appendix, 91–4. Munitiz, 'A "wicked woman" in the 13th century', 529–37.

[296] *Autobiographia* I, §70.

[297] *Epistulae*, 1–66 (Theodore to Blemmydes), 290–329 (Blemmydes to Theodore).

[298] *Autobiographia* I, §75.

of Theodore with which Akropolites concurs.[299] At the time of Theodore's final illness, on his deathbed, Blemmydes refused to absolve him and blamed him for his abandonment by God.[300] Similarly, Blemmydes refers to Theodore's closest friend, George Mouzalon, as 'of despicably low birth but highly placed more than anyone else in his access to imperial affection and high rank'.[301] This description of Mouzalon parallels Akropolites' own characterization of the man 'whom he [Theodore] loved above all others' (§60).

Blemmydes and Akropolites also express their views on offices and titles in similar ways. They both describe their steadfast resolve not to yield to imperial pressure: Blemmydes with regard to the patriarchal election—only Akropolites and Blemmydes state that Blemmydes was everyone's first choice[302]—and Akropolites after his punishment by Theodore II (§63). Blemmydes describes how, after his refusal to take up the appointment as patriarch, he was 'dragged into accepting' another post, a situation he recalls in the following way: 'I became more and more dissatisfied with these affairs which I considered empty noise and childish playthings.'[303] The phrase is reminiscent of Akropolites' protest when Theodore II gives him a title in 1255, along with four other men: 'In these childish games I also got caught up . . . an unfortunate plaything' (§60).[304]

Although the parallels in the views of the two men are strong and undeniable, there is at least one area in which they were diametrically opposed—in their stance towards the Komneno-Doukai in Epiros and Leo Gabalas in Rhodes. Blemmydes upholds the view that neither the caesar Leo Gabalas nor the Komneno-Doukai were subordinate to the emperor at Nicaea, nor derived their authority from him.[305] Akropolites, on the contrary, says of Theodore Komnenos Doukas and his family that they were 'enemies of the Roman empire' (§45, §49). Michael II is labelled a 'rebel', a 'renegade' (§70), a term Akropolites uses also of Leo Gabalas (§28) whom the emperor John III fought 'because of a rebellion' (§27). While Akropolites' representation of these men can be labelled the 'Nicaean' view, Blemmydes' opinion is more akin to that of the enemies of Nicaea and is otherwise found only in the writings of churchmen in the 'despotate of Epiros': Demetrios Chomatenos, John Apokaukos, and George Bardanes.[306]

[299] See below, 59–60. [300] *Autobiographia* I, §74–89, I, §86.

[301] *Autobiographia* I, §88.

[302] See commentary at §53; *Autobiographia* I, §75.

[303] *Autobiographia* II, §78 (p. 80.14–15).

[304] See below, 64–5, for Akrop.'s reasons for protesting.

[305] *Autobiographia* II, §20–4; I, §81; I, §63–4; letter to the patriarch Manuel: *Epistulae*, 325–9, esp. 329.113–17.

[306] Karpozilos, *The ecclesiastical controversy between the kingdom of Nicaea and the principality of Epiros*, *passim*; Angold, *Church and society*, 536–42; Macrides, 'Bad historian or good lawyer?', 187–96.

This stark difference in view towards 'other' powers can be attributed to the positions of the men and the kinds of works they wrote. Blemmydes was free to express his opinion in a work destined for the monks of his monastery, built with money inherited from his parents.[307] His student, on the other hand, was writing in Constantinople while he held an imperial office.

Classicizing features of the *History*

The *History* contains features which are associated with a classicizing historical narrative. It has a *prooimion* which places the author's writing in relation to previous narratives of events and gives expression to the principles he intends to follow in his work.[308] Speeches are another aspect of the classicizing history. In Akropolites' work these most often set out the reasons for military actions[309] but also convey the character of the speaker[310] and parade sentiments which reinforce the Nicaean-centred perspective of the narrative.[311] Akropolites cites classical authors sparingly;[312] evidence of his classical learning is to be found less in citations than in the self-consciously 'pure' language he maintains. The ancient names of foreign peoples are employed,[313] periphrases for ecclesiastical terms are used,[314] classical words are applied to contemporary things.[315] Any deviation from the pure language is identified: Akropolites likes to call attention to words which are not strictly Greek or ancient. Words which are local dialect or vernacular are qualified with the expression 'the indiscriminately babbling tongue calls . . . ' or 'the common people call' (§76).[316]

While Akropolites shares the above features with other writers of classicizing histories, his narrative is distinctive in many ways. Some aspects of his work which distinguish him from other writers have been discussed: the extent to which he intrudes into his narrative, a narrative tightly structured along chronological and geographical lines; his concise style of writing which

[307] Pach. II, 439.3–441.22.

[308] See above, 30, for a discussion of the *prooimion*.

[309] See, e.g., at §43, §59.

[310] For Andronikos Palaiologos, Michael Palaiologos: §43, §50, §78.

[311] Notably, the speech of Manglavites at Melnik: §44.

[312] Homer, *Il.* 4.43 at §2.13, §63.29, *Il.* 13.102 at §69.3, *Il.* 24.261 at §60.8, §75.19; *Od.* 1.3 at §55.1. Aristophanes, *Pl.* 25.27 at §45.18, Euripides, *Aiolos*, fr. 15 (§65.5).

[313] 'Persians' (but also 'Muslims' and 'Turks'), 'Scyths', 'Tacharioi' (Tatars).

[314] The pope is 'he who presides as bishop over Elder Rome' (§2) but also *papas* (§17).

[315] Ships are 'triremes' (§2, §22, etc.) but also 'dromons' (§48, §85). The 'metropolitan' is also an *hierarches* (§50.29), the bishop, an *archiereus* (§17).

[316] §24: 'Stageira' for 'Makre'; §35 and §43: 'Maritza' for 'Hebros'; §43: '*tzouloukones*'; §76: 'Vardar' for 'Naxeios'.

excludes descriptions of foreign people's way of life but allows some anecdotes 'like a relish'[317] and takes pleasure in playfulness with words,[318] citations of proverbs,[319] and variation in expression, most notably for death and dying.[320]

The influence of the administrative and legal documents that Akropolites handled as *megas logothetes* and also earlier, when he was an imperial secretary, makes itself evident in the *History* in a number of ways.[321] At §27, the long convoluted sentence with which Akropolites gives a precise account of John of Brienne's agreement with the Latin barons suggests that he is producing a paraphrase of the Latin document.[322] At §85, Akropolites refers to the Latins' living quarters in Constantinople as *campi*, a word otherwise attested only in thirteenth-century Latin texts.[323] In two cases, Akropolites employs legal terms. At §7.16, in describing the way in which independent rulers sprang up in different parts of the empire after 1204, he says that some of these men were summoned to the 'defence' of the land by its inhabitants. The word he uses, *δεφένδευσις*, is found in legal and military treatises. Another example of legal language is at §45.15. In describing the relationship of Demetrios Angelos to John III, Akropolites speaks of a 'pledge' (*ὑποθήκη*) and a 'debt' (*ὄφλημα*), implying that Thessalonike had been pledged to the emperor John when he made Demetrios despot and therefore John had right of possession, although the city remained with Demetrios, the debtor.

The *History* also presents certain distinctive usages of language. Akropolites twice employs the word *pyramis*[324] as a noun to denote a head covering. As such the word is a *hapax*; other writers use an adjectival form of the word to describe the shape of the hat. He uses, further, a well-known verb and noun—*ἀναγορεύειν*, *ἀναγόρευσις*—in a new way, to refer to coronation and not to proclamation, the more usual technical meaning of the word. This 'new' specific meaning is also found in the writing of Holobolos and, later, in Pachymeres.[325] Like other authors of his times, he employs 'east' and 'west' to

[317] §42, §45.

[318] §5.10; §32.7; §42.2, 4, 13; §50.26, 31; §63.7.

[319] §9.5, §33.9, §35.3, §49.5, §52.26, §81.1.

[320] §19, §39 (pp. 62.17–18, 20; 64.1, 6–7), §42 (pp 71.22; 72.1), §43 (p. 73.1), §46 (p. 84.14), §52.28, §74 (p. 153.22).

[321] Hunger, *Literatur* I, 446, remarks on a certain formality of expression which he ascribes to the influence of Akropolites' chancery work. According to H. Zilliacus, *Zur Abundanz der spätgriechischen Gebrauchssprache* (Helsinki, 1967), 30 ff., as cited by M. Whitby, *The emperor Maurice and his historian* (Oxford, 1988), 341 n. 79, the features of chancery style are a penchant for long words, circumlocution, formal politeness, tautologies to intensify meaning, periphrases, and parallel or adversative clauses in antithesis. Akrop.'s prose certainly bears the marks of this influence.

[322] §27.7. See above, 8 n. 26, for the suggestion that Akrop. knew Latin.

[323] §85.12.

[324] §11.15, §40.23.

[325] §7.6; §21.7; §89.5; Failler, 'La proclamation impériale de Michel VIII et d'Andronic II', 241–2.

refer to the parts of the former empire in Anatolia and the Balkans, a usage attested also in the twelfth century and originally linked to the administrative division of the empire.[326] Peculiar to Akropolites, however, is the phrase τὸ δυτικὸν γένος, the 'western race', to mean the Greeks of Epiros living under the Komneno-Doukai.[327] By using *genos* of the Epirots, a term he otherwise applies to Tatars (§42), Scyths (§76), Latins (§36), Venetians (§85), Sicilians and Lakonians (§81), Akropolites shows that he regards his fellow Romans as 'others'. Indeed, he elsewhere expresses the view that these 'westerners' were enemies of the Romans.[328]

A central aspect of the *History* which sets it apart from classicizing works is Akropolites' explanation of the causes of events. The large role classicizing authors ascribe to *tyche*, 'luck' or 'fortune', is, for Akropolites, replaced by kin relations. While the connection between family interest and political action was an integral part of Akropolites' social reality, his continual reference to affinal and consanguineal ties contributes to the conclusion that kinship provided him with the key explanation for events. Anselm of Cahieu left his wife, the emperor John's sister-in-law, in the fortress at Tzouroulos, thinking that the emperor 'would not wish to besiege the town, because of his sister-in-law' (§47). Andronikos Nestongos, a cousin of John III, 'considered the tie of kinship to be of no account and broke the bond of friendship, plotting insurrection against his first cousin the emperor' (§23). Manuel Angelos 'was not troubled on the whole by the Bulgarians, since he shared his bed with Asan's daughter' (§26). The sultan Kaykhusraw gave aid to the emperor Theodore I because he called Theodore's wife, the empress Anna, his 'sister' (§8). Asan allowed Theodore Komnenos Doukas to take Manuel, Asan's son-in-law, out of office because he was 'more fond of his father-in-law Theodore than his son-in-law Manuel; for he loved his wife Eirene [Theodore's daughter] exceedingly, no less than Antony did Cleopatra' (§38). Michael II 'had big ideas and spoke arrogantly' because of his marriage alliances with the king of Sicily and the prince of Achaia (§79).

This small selection of examples of the role of kinship[329] in the *History* shows that, for Akropolites, actions are regulated, and explained, by kin ties. His emphasis on these connections is a distinctive characteristic of his judgement on events. His kinship tie to Michael Palaiologos was of undeniable importance in making his fortune and his future.[330] It is not, therefore,

[326] §4.4, §43.2. [327] At §80.9, 12. [328] §45.25, §49.

[329] See also §13, §22, §24, §25, §31, §33, §34, §36, §37, §40, §49, §51, §55, §62, §68, §69, §73, §76, §83. Akropolites also comments on marriages which are within the prohibited degrees of kinship: see §18, §38.2 and §50.34. For the Bulgarians and the importance of kinship, see below, 92 and n. 586.

[330] See the discussion, 17–18, 27–8.

surprising that he should have seen kinship as the moving force in events. Yet its very centrality for Akropolites may be attributable to the threat which Theodore II's ideas had posed to it, ideas which reversed the world order in making kinship second to friendship.[331]

Divine providence

For Akropolites *tyche* is not a significant factor in the way events transpire; neither, however, is divine providence. Indeed, a partial reading of the *History* can lead one to the conclusion that Akropolites is a rationalist and a naturalist. His explanations of natural phenomena and death are scientific, quite unlike the causes other people ascribe to them. Akropolites states that the Bulgarian John died at the siege of Thessalonike because of pleurisy but 'some said' that his death was caused by divine wrath (§13). Asan thought that the deaths of his wife, his child and the archbishop of Trnovo which occurred close in time were attributable to God's anger; he had broken his alliance with John III, separated his daughter from her betrothed, and made war on the emperor. Akropolites reports Asan's belief without comment (§36). The solar eclipse of 1239 occurred because of the superposition of the moon, as Akropolites knew from his studies (§39). Finally, the author's view of miracles, as expressed by Michael Palaiologos, contributes greatly to the impression of a cool rationalist. When it is suggested that Michael clear his name by providing proof by red-hot iron, Michael states disbelief not only in his own, but also in anyone's, ability to work miracles:

> If an iron which has been made red-hot should be placed in the hand of a man who is a living being, I do not know how it would not burn it, unless perhaps he were carved . . . from stone . . . or were made of bronze.

Akropolites endorses this statement: 'He would reply thus and—by Themis—quite justly' (§50). Michael's lack of belief in miracles is further underlined by the ironic reply he gives to a man of the church:

> I am a sinful man and cannot work such wonders. But if you, being a metropolitan and a man of God . . . heat up the iron for me with your hands with which you touch the divine sacrifice . . . and with your own holy hands place the iron in my hand, I have faith in the Lord Christ that He will . . . work the truth by a miracle.

[331] Pach. I, 43.1–3, 61.6–20. See also above, 24–5, on the significance of friendship for Theodore.

The metropolitan declined the invitation.

These passages contribute further to the impression that Akropolites was different from most of his contemporaries. However, only a partial reading can produce this idea about the author. For, if Akropolites is a rationalist, he is an inconsistent one. Kalojan died of pleurisy but the empress Eirene's death was presaged by an eclipse and a comet (§39). Constantinople fell to the Latins without reason in 1204, but to Michael Palaiologos the city fell in 1261 'by the providence of God' (§85).

Thus, Akropolites' rationality depends on context. When people distant from him are in adverse (or prosperous) circumstances, he reports but does not comment. On the contrary, when someone or something dear to him prospers, divine causation is at work. Judging from the number of references to God or Christ made in the *History* in relation to Michael or his kin—10 out of 14 mentions have to do with the Palaiologoi and their relatives[332]—there is no one Akropolites cares about more than Michael Palaiologos. In these passages the usually unemotional Akropolites, the concise and orderly narrator, embellishes and becomes prolix.

Divine providence does play a role in Akropolites' understanding and interpretation of events but its role is modest except in Palaiologan affairs. It would not be an exaggeration to say that kinship is adduced more readily and more commonly by Akropolites as a cause of events than is God.

The emperors at 'Nicaea': Akropolites' *Kaiserkritik*

Akropolites expresses his views on the emperors at Nicaea in a number of ways: through a setpiece *Kaiserkritik* which is incorporated in his summary of the reigns of Theodore I and John III; in reported speeches and conversations in which he was also involved; in two long passages—widely separated in the *History*—which concentrate on specific incidents at great length and give contrasting portrayals of Theodore II and Michael Palaiologos.

Kaiserkritik forms a part of the 'obituary notice' for emperors. Akropolites provides Theodore I and John III with full notices in which he informs readers of the emperor's age at time of death, length of reign, character, military ability, generosity to subjects, sexual continence, surviving children, and burial place.[333] The obituary notice for Theodore II contains only a few of

[332] §9, §34, §36 (Tarchaneiotes, Andronikos Palaiologos' son-in-law), §44, §46, §50 (trial of Michael Palaiologos), §51 (Eudokia, mother-in-law of Michael Palaiologos), §63, §64, §65, §80 (Michael Palaiologos), §85 (reconquest of Constantinople), §86, §87 (Michael Palaiologos).

[333] Missing from this list is any reference to the emperors' orthodoxy. See above, 43–4.

these elements, while that for Theodore I, the only emperor Akropolites did not know personally, includes a description of this emperor's appearance.

The three categories most prominent in the obituaries Akropolites wrote for the first two emperors at Nicaea are performance in battle, generosity to subjects, and sexual continence. Akropolites contrasts the habits and skills of Theodore I and John III in battle—their 'fierceness' and 'endurance'—with their weakness for women—their 'defeat' at women's hands.[334] Akropolites dwells on John III's 'passion for females' and is explicit, naming the emperor's mistress, Marchesina, and devoting several lines to Vatatzes' dependence on her. Indeed, Akropolites appears to mention the emperor's second wife, Constanza-Anna, only as a way to introduce Marchesina into the discussion.[335]

Akropolites assigns several lines to Vatatzes' manner of conducting battles. He begins on a positive note: 'This emperor was capable of endurance in battle.' He then taints this positive quality with a negative connotation. The emperor was 'afraid (δειλιῶν) of the fickleness of Ares';[336] he therefore avoided close combat, wearing the enemy out with 'stubbornness and obstinacy', instead. This is not the picture of courage.[337]

The theme of the emperor John's generosity to his subjects also concerns Akropolites. He finds the emperor wanting in this respect. He comments: 'Gifts he made less use of for his own subjects but to foreigners, and especially to those who came as ambassadors, he extended a more open hand, that he might be praised by them.'[338] Akropolites thus makes two negative points about the emperor's gift-giving: he was not generous enough to his subjects; he was generous to foreigners for the wrong reasons.

The reference to ambassadors links Akropolites' criticism with a story told by Pachymeres. The emperor John admonished his son Theodore for wearing silk and gold while hunting. These clothes were to be worn only in front of foreign ambassadors, to display the wealth of the empire's subjects.[339] Akropolites may have been reacting to the anecdote, turning the emperor's concern to respect his subjects' wealth into an example of the emperor's vanity. Whether this was the case[340] or not, his criticism and Pachymeres' admiration have in common a portrait of an emperor who reserved the display of imperial splendour for the outside world, while adopting a more modest domestic style.

[334] §18; §52. [335] §52.19. [336] §52.21.

[337] §52.22. Yet in many passages in the *History* (§22, §27, §30, §46) Akrop. does praise John III for his 'brave spirit', strategic shrewdness and endurance.

[338] §52.17.

[339] Pach. I, 61–3. See below, 74–5, for further discussion of this anecdote.

[340] For this view, see Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 71–2.

Pachymeres' story, furthermore, is only one of many examples of the behaviour of an emperor who broke with the pre-1204 manner of government and adopted a style more responsible to his subjects. Gregoras elaborates on John III's measures when he describes the '*oaton*', the crown made with money collected from the sale of eggs laid by the emperor's own hens.[341] Concerned to separate public wealth from his own, John ruled in contrast to the twelfth-century imperial type, as if in response to the criticisms Zonaras and Choniates had expressed of the Komnenoi. But it is not from Akropolites that we learn this about John III.[342]

How little Akropolites admires John III's style can be inferred from his characterization of the emperor's wife, Eirene. Akropolites singles her out for comment of all the empresses at Nicaea. He devotes several pages to a discussion at the palace in which he also took part and which he relates 'to show how she loved learning and valued those who have it'.[343] He describes her as 'regal', exhibiting 'imperial majesty greatly'. Akropolites comments that after a plot on John's life, early in his reign, the emperor behaved more cautiously and set up a stricter surveillance of his subjects. 'Especially intent on these matters was the empress Eirene, for she had a more manly disposition and in all things was more imperial.'[344] By his use of the comparative in describing Eirene, Akropolites shows what qualities the emperor John was lacking.[345]

Akropolites concludes his overview of John III's reign by referring to his heir, his son Theodore. All Romans had hope that 'they would gain many good things from the new emperor. And if there was anyone who had been distressed by his father or had suffered either privation of money or property, he had hopes of finding a deliverance from these evils.'[346] Yet Akropolites expresses even greater disappointment in Theodore II than in his father: 'For he was so bad to his subjects and he treated those under his control in such a way that they all called his father, the emperor, blessed.'[347] Akropolites here makes an oblique and sarcastic reference to the emperor John's reputation for saintliness. For the cult of the emperor saint, John the 'Almsgiver', had

[341] Greg. I, 43.11–15.

[342] For Choniates' and Zonaras' criticisms of Alexios and Manuel Komnenos, see Magdalino, 'Aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*', 326–46; for the Nicaean emperors, see Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 280–2.

[343] At §39.11–12.

[344] §23.13. By 'more imperial' Akrop. may have in mind Eirene's generosity to subjects. Pach. (I, 59.10–12) states that Theodore II inherited his open-handedness from his mother.

[345] Akropolites' characterization of Eirene and the implied contrast with John is similar to Zonaras' (III. 765–6) portrayal of Eirene Doukaina and Alexios I. See §23.13.

[346] §52. Akropolites also concludes his funeral oration for John III by looking forward to the son and heir: *Opera* II, 25–9.

[347] §52.27.

certainly formed by 1264 and Akropolites was writing with this knowledge.[348] He thus turns contemporary evidence for John's holiness into an indictment of his son's reign, thereby negating both.

Akropolites' criticism of John III and Theodore II is as ungenerous as it is remarkable. It stands in stark contrast to the literature of the cult of the emperor John, the Almsgiver,[349] but also to the evidence from Skoutariotes[350] and the later writers, Pachymeres and Gregoras.[351] In expressing this criticism Akropolites was responding and reacting to the positive stories of the Laskarides which were circulating at the time of his writing.[352] But by so doing he was distancing himself from the emperors who had supported him and was positioning himself with the supporters of Michael Palaiologos. This re-alignment explains why Eirene, wife of John III, was the only imperial figure from the past whom he admired. She was not only a link with pre-1204 Constantinople, through her grandfather, Alexios III;[353] she was also connected with the future, the Palaiologoi. Her aunt on her mother's side, Eirene, had married Alexios Palaiologos who had been designated heir to the throne by Alexios III. Their daughter was the mother of Michael Palaiologos.[354] Before she married John Vatatzes, Eirene herself had been married to Andronikos Palaiologos, likewise designated heir to the throne.[355] For Akropolites, her 'regal' bearing, her 'more imperial manner', derived from her blood, her first marriage, and her relationship to Michael Palaiologos. It would not have escaped Akropolites' notice that ancestors of Michael Palaiologos had twice been about to inherit the throne. Untimely death, in both cases, had given the Laskarides their chance.

Eirene, however, was also the mother of Theodore II Laskaris, the emperor from whom all Romans hoped they 'would gain many good things'. Theodore was the emperor George Akropolites knew best at Nicaea, as his teacher, his correspondent, his friend. The letters of Theodore show warmth and high regard for George.[356] It is more difficult, however, to ascertain what George thought of Theodore in the latter's lifetime, since Akropolites' letters have not

[348] See §52.27. A comment by Blemmydes in his autobiographical preface to the typikon for his monastery, dated 1264, provides the earliest datable evidence for a cult. See *Autobiographia* I, §11; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 49 and n. 25. For Akropolites' date of writing, see 31–4.

[349] Polemis, 'Remains of an acoluthia for the emperor John Ducas Batatzes', 542–7; Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period', 69–71.

[350] See Skout. 508.24–509.6 and below, 68–9.

[351] For John III: Pach. I, 101.4–16; Greg. I, 42.3–6; for Theodore II: Pach. I, 59.10–12.

[352] See above, 31–4, for the date of his writing.

[353] See below, 79–81, for Akropolites' long exposition of this emperor's life after he fled from Constantinople.

[354] §5. For this marriage, see Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 443–4.

[355] §15. See also Genealogical Table 2.

[356] See above, 11. See also his encomium of George in *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 107.279–81.

survived,[357] while the *History* dates from a period after Theodore's death. From the *History* we can learn only what view Akropolites had of the emperors at Nicaea after their deaths, when he was in Constantinople as a member of Michael Palaiologos' court.

Akropolites' preview of Theodore II's reign, included in the summary of his father's reign, is the only setpiece *Kaiserkritik* Akropolites offers for this emperor. When he comes to give notice of his death, there is no overview of the reign. Instead Akropolites restricts himself to a description of the emperor's deathbed confession which includes an unflattering comparison with the 'whore of the Gospels'.[358] Yet readers of the *History* can learn more about this emperor's character than about that of any other emperor at 'Nicaea'. For Akropolites conveys a great deal about Theodore's thoughts, feelings and actions during his two Bulgarian expeditions in 1254–6 which George accompanied. Theodore is the most fully developed character in the *History*.

In his narration of the events of the campaigns Theodore undertook immediately upon succeeding to the throne, Akropolites shows Theodore to be 'eager' and 'zealous', 'burning to take action'.[359] He is demanding of himself; he moved so quickly that he struck amazement into the Bulgarians and delighted his own subjects who named him 'swift eagle'.[360] But he was also exacting of others: '. . . he did not pay any attention to the weather nor did he make provision for the bitterness of winter, for he was thinking about one thing only, fulfilling his own wish'.[361] He had a violent temper. Learning that Strategopoulos and Tornikes had run away from their command, 'the emperor was beside himself with anger at this and, in a fit of rage, ordered those same men to return to the same battle just as they were'.[362]

Akropolites' characterization of the emperor on these campaigns culminates in a description of an event which took place in 1256 at Regina, while the emperor was awaiting the surrender of Tzepaina, in accordance with his agreement with the Bulgarians. Akropolites announces from the start that he will relate something 'wondrous' and 'worthy of remembrance and report'.[363] He then describes the scene with exceptional attention to detail: the date and time of day, the background to the event, the place of meeting and the circumstances are mentioned. By giving so much circumstantial information,

[357] Two contemporary writings of Akropolites are his preface to the collection of Theodore's letters (by 1252: see above, 11 n. 52) and his words about the heir to the throne in the funeral oration for John III (1254). It is difficult to learn from these what Akropolites' feelings were for Theodore.

[358] §74. For a discussion of this passage, see below 62, and n. 373.

[359] §55.7. [360] §56, §58.9. [361] At §59.16–17. See below, 98.

[362] §57.9. [363] §63.1.

Akropolites slows down the narrative, building up suspense in the reader whose expectations of learning about a 'wondrous' thing have been aroused.

Theodore II was anxious about a report that the Bulgarian ruler's father-in-law, a mediator of the agreement, had deceived him. The emperor asked his assembled men and Akropolites in particular, as the official in charge of the treaty and oaths, what they thought of this report. Although each time they replied that it seemed false, the emperor appeared not to be satisfied. He would question them all over again. The question and answer session culminates in Theodore's outburst against Akropolites: 'filled with boundless anger and madness, as if in a Bacchic frenzy, [he] moved to draw his sword . . .'. The emperor then ordered two mace-bearers to beat Akropolites. He had recently appointed 24 of them, 'I know not why, if not on my account, so that the stage of the drama be given an appearance worthy of a tragedy'.[364]

In this passage, the emperor is shown to be anxious, insecure, unstable, and little short of mad. Akropolites compares Theodore to a follower of Bacchus and the scene to a tragedy. In the course of reporting the beating which he received on the emperor's orders, Akropolites rehearses, in long paratactic clauses, all that he had done for Theodore in the past and all the good things Theodore had said about him on other occasions in public. These clauses are framed, at the beginning, by the words, 'Our emperor who was so good to us' and, at the end, by 'now ordered two mace-bearers to beat me'.

Akropolites does not only expose the faults of the Laskarides; he contrasts them with the excellence of the Palaiologoi. The latter are introduced into the *History* early in the narrative and, thereafter, frequently. Akropolites refers to Michael's father Andronikos, the *megas domestikos* of John III, nine times, more than any other single person, apart from Akropolites himself and individual emperors. Not only is the number of references to Andronikos remarkable; so too is the quality of those references. The mention of his name is always accompanied by a phrase, either his title or a short panegyric: 'first among those appointed to command, a most intelligent and gentle man, well-acquainted with arming for battle and governing people in times of war and peace'.[365] Akropolites' description of Andronikos in this passage includes the adjective 'most . . . gentle', *πραότατον*, an attribute rarely ascribed to anyone other than the emperor. Here, however, Akropolites applies it to a subject of the emperor and in the superlative.[366] The implication is clear. Even before

[364] §63.14–18. [365] §46 (twice), §28, §36, §40, §43, §49, §50 (twice), §78.

[366] §46.3 for Andronikos. The *logothetes* Demetrios Tornikes is described as such in the *epitaphios* by Euthymios Tornikes: Darrouzès, 'Les discours d'Euthyme Tornikès', 98.27–8. See §52.15 where John III is described as *praos*, a quality which emperors share with king David. On the *synkrisis* with David in imperial encomia, see Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 276, 279. For the ascription of this virtue to thirteenth- and fourteenth-century emperors, see Angelov, *Imperial ideology*, 84.

Michael is introduced into the *History*, we know about his past, his ancestry with its imperial connotations. From the first mention of him we learn about his future: 'Michael Komnenos, by whom some years later the imperial office of the Romans was enriched to its own good fortune and honour'.[367]

The reader is thus prepared for Michael before he appears in the narrative. His first large part is given to him by Akropolites in a long account of his trial for treason in 1253. The role of the accused would not normally be a desirable one but Akropolites transforms potentially damaging material into a showpiece for Michael's wit, charm and intelligence. As the longest account devoted to a single event, it competes with the beating episode in 1256 at Regina. As one of the few trials for treason in Byzantine historical writing, and one which features trial by ordeal, it is a much discussed passage.[368]

The accusations against Michael and his trial are not subjects Akropolites could ignore, as they were controversial aspects of Michael's life before he became emperor. However, the word treason is never mentioned; the reader has difficulty learning what the accusation actually was. Yet, although the charge is unclear, Michael's innocence is not: Akropolites makes a declaration of it at the very start of the trial.[369]

Earlier discussions of Akropolites' version of the trial[370] have focused on the ordeal mentioned in it and have ignored the way in which the case for Michael Palaiologos is constructed by Akropolites: his language and figures of speech, his allusions to painting/artists and statues/sculptors, his comparison of Michael to artistic representations of a brave warrior and to classical statues, and the encomium of Michael with which the trial ends. Michael is triumphant in Akropolites' trial, although far from victorious in the emperor's court.

But Akropolites reverses the facts of the case. In his account it is the emperor John and his advisor, the metropolitan Phokas, who are on trial. Akropolites' use of irony and word-play underscores the pretence at justice in the emperor's court.[371] Michael speaks as a Roman, defending Roman

[367] §46.4.

[368] G. Czebe, 'Studien zum Hochverratsprozesse des Michael Paläologos im Jahre 1252', *BNJ* 8 (1931), 59–98; Angold, *Exile*, 167–8; M. Angold, 'The interaction of Latins and Byzantines during the period of the Latin empire (1204–61): The case of the ordeal', 1–10; D. Geanakoplos, 'Ordeal by fire and judicial duel at Byzantine Nicaea (1253): Western or eastern legal influence?', in Geanakoplos, *Interaction of the 'sibling' Byzantine and western cultures in the Middle Ages and Italian Renaissance (330–1600)* (New Haven, 1976), 146–55; Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus*, 21–6.

[369] §50.22.

[370] For what follows see Macrides, 'George Akropolites' rhetoric', 206. For Pach. on this event, see below, 72–4.

[371] See the text at Heis. 96.2–4; 96.6; 97.16; 99.8; 99.11.

practice and Roman law, while the emperor and his advisor advocate barbarian practice, the use of the hot iron. Although this ordeal was not applied to Michael—indeed, it was suggested to Michael by Phokas in private (overheard only by Akropolites)—Akropolites reminds the reader that Michael underwent the ordeal metaphorically: 'For since God intended to raise him to the imperial eminence, he tried him with the fire of torture and by the test of the smelting-furnace, so that when he should ascend the imperial throne he would not easily believe slander and false accusations...'[372] The contrast with John III and Theodore II is implicit.

Akropolites uses his literary skills to construct a case for Michael, both in the court episode, and elsewhere. The case 'for' Michael requires the case 'against' Theodore II and his father John III. To create the antithetical pair Akropolites juxtaposes two scenes, the longest narratives devoted to one subject in the *History*, the trial of 1253 and the beating at Regina in 1256. They represent two extremes of behaviour. The images Akropolites ascribes to each are widely divergent. Michael is *like* paintings of brave warriors; Theodore *is* a Bacchante. Michael is cool and rational; Theodore is enraged and irrational. Michael is masculine and heroic; Theodore is feminine and weak.[373]

The next opportunity for Akropolites to display Michael's qualities comes in the form of another potentially damaging incident in the latter's pre-imperial career: his flight to the Turks in the reign of Theodore II (1256). The reader can easily forget that Michael was engaged in an act of questionable loyalty, for emphasis is put on Michael's imperial demeanour: the Turks had only to see him to recognize in him a man 'worthy of monarchy'.[374] The citation from Euripides' *Aiolos* can be found also in other Byzantine authors who likewise put the admiring phrase in the mouth of an adversary. Even the enemy expresses positive opinions about Michael.

In this case also Akropolites creates, out of a dubious act, a positive image. The flight to the Turks, like the trial for treason, is constructed to reveal Michael's imperial qualities which contrast, again, with Theodore's. Akropolites shows an anxious emperor Theodore questioning him about Michael's intentions, thoughts and feelings.[375] While Theodore is 'troubled', 'uncertain', Michael is decisive. He sends letters to the men under his command, asking them to 'Carry on, as you would with me there.'

[372] §50.33.

[373] Akropolites compares Theodore with a woman, emotional and lacking control, also in the *synkrisis* of him with Mary Magdalene, the repentant 'whore of the Gospels' who weeps at Christ's feet. See §74.

[374] §65.5. See also above, 33 and n. 194 for Holobolos' version of this citation.

[375] §64.

Thus, Michael has imperial qualities, recognized by everyone, including the enemy. He is destined to become emperor. But, when he does, it is with reluctance: 'Michael Komnenos felt no small qualms about taking hold of Roman affairs', 'he shrank from the undertaking'.[376] Akropolites uses the topos of the reluctant ruler, presenting Michael as an ideal emperor, one who, far from taking office out of ambition or greed, is approached by others who have to convince him he is worthy.[377]

Michael's accession to the throne is described by Akropolites with another topos, that of renewal. Joy and light replace darkness and storm.[378] The metaphorical associations are of a transition from a turbulent tyranny to a peaceful and prosperous reign.[379] Akropolites accompanies the description with a discussion of the emperor's gift-giving: 'he rescued and restored all those who, for whatever reason, had been imprisoned by the emperor Theodore or had been neglected . . . lavishly heaping money on them'. 'Thus, all were exulting and jumping for joy, having forgotten their previous grievous and bitter way of life.'

Akropolites follows up this account of Michael's reversal of Theodore's policies, his great generosity to his subjects, with another reversal, Michael's lack of generosity to foreign ambassadors. The connection between generosity to subjects and to ambassadors had been created by Akropolites in his overview of John III's reign: 'Gifts he made less use of for his own subjects but to foreigners, and especially to those who came as ambassadors, he extended a more open hand, that he might be praised by them.'[380] It cannot be a coincidence that the account of Michael's gift-giving to his subjects is followed immediately by a description of the embassy of the Latins in Constantinople to the new emperor Michael.[381] Akropolites gives a blow-by-blow description of the ambassador's requests and the emperor's clever refusal in each case. The emperor is 'playful'. The ambassadors, 'put to shame', return to Constantinople, 'having accomplished nothing'. Thus, Michael is generous to his subjects while unforthcoming to ambassadors. His behaviour is the antithesis of that of his predecessors.

Another sharp contrast is provided by a comparison with Pachymeres' account of the same embassy, so different as to be almost unrecognizable as the same occasion.

[376] §76.

[377] §76.11. See Weiler, 'The *rex renitens* and the medieval ideal of kingship, ca. 900–ca. 1250', 1–42.

[378] §78.

[379] See Macrides, 'George Akropolites' rhetoric', 208–9.

[380] See above, 56–8.

[381] §78.

> The Italians from the Great City sent ambassadors
> to him and he made a truce in the war he was waging
> against them, so as to conclude later a stronger pact
> if they should fulfil some of his proposals. But as the
> ambassadors were Romans, descended from Romans,
> he handled them with care and, although he had nothing
> in the City, he gave them what they demanded, should he
> acquire it, and he confirmed this with chrysobulls.[382]

Here Michael promises what he does not have, rather than not giving what he does have. Pachymeres' version is literally the reverse of Akropolites'. Akropolites' account has a legendary ring to it. He has transformed the event into an emblematic story,[383] as indeed he does with all the events in which Michael is involved. For, although Akropolites presents himself as one who knows Michael's thoughts,[384] his presentation of Michael is stereotypical. There is nothing personal about his portrayal. Topoi describe him and his rule—'worthy of monarchy', the 'reluctant emperor', the 'calm after the storm'. Correct sentiments come from Michael's mouth. He upholds things Roman, and God is always with him and his enterprises.[385] Michael is a cardboard figure.

Akropolites makes further comparisons of Theodore II and Michael VIII when he juxtaposes the men each emperor favoured and promoted. The contrast is first stated at §75 in Akropolites' description of the scene at the tomb of Theodore. The (unspecified) murderers of the Mouzalon brothers reproach the dead emperor for entrusting the empire to 'loathsome little men, worthless specimens of humanity', 'while he neglected noble men and expert commanders'. This comparison is given substance at §77 when Akropolites discusses the fate of Theodore's 'apparently select men and magnates', Karyanites and John Angelos. The one escaped from prison and was killed by the Turcomans, the other committed suicide: 'Such was the brave spirit of the men appointed by the emperor Theodore . . . to be commanders of the Roman armies.' This concluding statement is followed immediately by the appointments of commanders and the promotions made by the newly crowned emperor Michael.

From his *Kaiserkritik* of the emperors of the 'empire of Nicaea', Akropolites, who wrote his *History* in the reign of Michael Palaiologos,[386] emerges as a willing and able spokesman for that emperor. This much has never been in question.[387] Yet the way in which, and the degree to which, Akropolites changes history as a supporter of Michael have not been explored. His *History* is a carefully constructed case for Michael and against John and Theodore,

[382] Pach. I, 149.22–151.3.
[383] See below, 72–5, for differences in the accounts of Akrop. and Pach.
[384] §64, §65.9. [385] See above, 55. [386] See above, 31.
[387] Hunger, *Literatur* I, 443.

the emperors from whom George received his education, promotions, and an aristocratic wife. Akropolites writes as if he were one of those who had suffered disappointment or punishment under John and Theodore; he writes as if he too had a grievance. He gives a protracted account of the beating episode but also dwells on the long month after the beating, when he resolved never to be reconciled with Theodore.[388] The scene provides Akropolites with an explanation[389] for his later abandonment of his loyalty to Theodore and transfer of allegiance to Michael. His change in loyalty is presented as a self-evident consequence of the actions of the dangerously unbalanced Theodore. Yet Skoutariotes tells another story; the emperor's estrangement from Akropolites lasted only one day: 'He was once again the *megas logothetes*, honoured above most people by his [Theodore's] uncle Manuel Laskaris and the *protovestiarios* George Mouzalon, who drew him into his [Theodore's] presence, after the grievous events, and appeased him.'[390]

Ironically, it was Theodore and his father who gave Akropolites the means to speak as a member of the Constantinopolitan aristocracy, as one of those with noble blood who had not flourished under the Laskarides. He used what he acquired from them to construct not only a case for Michael Palaiologos, but also for himself.

AKROPOLITES AND LATER WRITERS

Theodore Skoutariotes

Although the sources of Akropolites' *History* cannot be identified with any certainty,[391] the work itself, as a whole or in part,[392] served as a source for later writers of historical narrative. The writers for whom the *History* was a main source are Theodore Skoutariotes, the presumed author of the anonymously transmitted *Synopsis Chronike*[393] (a chronicle which deals with events from the creation of the world to 1261), and Ephraim,[394] whose verse chronicle

[388] §63: Heis. 132–3.

[389] Hinterberger, *Autobiographie*, 315; cf. Hunger, *Literatur* I, 445.

[390] Skout. 526.9–13.

[391] On this, see above, 35–9.

[392] Constantine Akropolites may have taken from his father's *History* the implicit comparison of Kalojan with Krum (see §13.10; also Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 59, 84) and the epithet 'Dog John' which was applied to Kalojan (§13.20).

[393] Published by Sathas, '*Ἀνωνύμου Σύνοψις Χρονική*', *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, VII. See below, 68–70, for a discussion of the identification of the author with Theodore Skoutariotes.

[394] *Chronographia*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1840); new edn by O. Lampsidis, 2 vols (Athens, 1984, 1985), here vol. I. For a discussion of Ephraim's sources and his methods as a writer see O. Lampsidis, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und seiner Chronik* (Athens, 1971), 29, 42–51; Hunger, *Literatur* I, 478–80.

covers the Roman and Byzantine empires to 1261. For two other authors the *History* provided less material: Nikephoros Gregoras, whose *Roman History* deals with the years 1204–1359,[395] and Makarios Melissenos, metropolitan of Monemvasia in the sixteenth century, who compiled an expanded version of the work attributed to George Sphrantzes.[396]

Although both Ephraim and Skoutariotes make full use of the *History*, they differ greatly in the extent to which they are dependent on it for the events of 1204–61. The *History* is Ephraim's sole source for the thirteenth century. The *Synopsis chronike*, however, stands on its own in its significance for the history of the period. Heisenberg recognized its independent value, publishing the author's additions to Akropolites' *History* as a supplement to his edition.[397]

Yet the importance of the *Synopsis* derives not only from its additions to Akropolites' work but also from information supplementary to earlier writers' accounts. The most dramatic example of supplementary information, otherwise unattested, is Skoutariotes' narrative of the role of Alexios I Komnenos in asking for military aid from the west in the form of an appeal to free the Holy Sepulchre.[398] Over 50 years ago, Charanis brought Skoutariotes' narrative to the attention of historians, showing that his account calls into question western medieval and modern views of the origins of the crusade.[399] His article and Skoutariotes' narrative have been ignored or discounted,[400] perhaps because so little is known about the author of the *Synopsis*. Yet, Skoutariotes' information about the First Crusade is not a one-off, nor was it written with hindsight, anachronistically. When his account of the origins of the crusade is put together with other passages on Alexios

[395] *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia*, ed. Schopen, I; trans. and commentary by J.-L. van Dieten, *Nikephoros Gregoras, Rhomäische Geschichte*, 5 vols (Stuttgart, 1973–2003). See van Dieten, *Gregoras*, I, 41–2, for Gregoras' sources; Hunger, *Literatur* I, 453–65. The extent to which, and how, Gregoras used Akropolites' *History* has yet to be explored.

[396] *Georgios Sphrantzes Memorii 1401–1477*, ed. V. Grecu; Hunger, *Literatur* I, 494–9; *ODB* III, 1937; V. Grecu, 'Georgios Sphrantzes', *BSl* 26 (1965), 62–73, here 67–8. The *prooimion* of Melissenos' work is taken from Akrop.: see §1.

[397] *Additamenta*, in Heis., *Opera* I, 278–302. The only discussion of these 'additions' to the *History* to date is by V. N. Zavražin, 'K voprosu o tolkovanii odnogo fragmenta iz "Prilozenij" Feodora Skutariota', *VV* 41 (1980), 252–5.

[398] Skout. 184.29–185.17.

[399] P. Charanis, 'Byzantium, the west and the origin of the first crusade', *B* 19 (1949), 17–36; repr. in P. Charanis, *Social, economic and political life in the Byzantine empire* (London, 1973), no. xiv.

[400] H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. J. Gillingham, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1988), 7, affirmed the trustworthiness of the account but most recently, J. Harris, *Byzantium and the crusades* (London, 2003), 48, has discounted it as anachronistic. Cf. J. Shepard, 'Cross-purposes: Alexius Comnenus and the First Crusade', in J. Phillips, ed., *The First Crusade* (Manchester, 1997), 107–29, here 121 and nn 69, 71; P. Magdalino, 'The pen of the aunt: Echoes of the mid-twelfth century in the *Alexiad*', in T. Gouma-Peterson, ed., *Anna Komnene and her times* (New York, 2000), 15–43, here 25–6.

Komnenos in his chronicle, it becomes clear that Skoutariotes had at his disposal narrative sources which have not otherwise survived. This author alone knows the name of the ambassador whom Alexios sent to Hungary to seek a bride for his son John, and refers to the existence of writers who recorded the empress Eirene Doukaina's good works.[401] Skoutariotes supplies otherwise unknown material not only for Alexios' reign but also for earlier periods, also giving circumstantial information for other emperors.[402]

Likewise, Skoutariotes' significance for the thirteenth century is greater and more complicated than at first thought. His additions to Akropolites' *History* are valuable but his omissions from, and variations on, Akropolites' account are equally important for an understanding of the period. The additions, omissions and variations, seen together, contribute to an alternative view of the thirteenth century, one that differs considerably from that of Akropolites but shares much with Pachymeres' perspective.[403]

First, there are the differences of vocabulary or expression. Skoutariotes simplifies Akropolites' text, both syntactically and lexically. In his *prooimion*, he describes his work as 'having transmitted the intricacy of the words and the grandeur of the meanings by a common and usual expression . . .'.[404] This he does by removing classicizing terms, and replacing them with functional ones,[405] as well as by simplifying Akropolites' constructions. The *Synopsis chronike* is a metaphrasis.[406]

However, Skoutariotes also makes substantive additions to Akropolites' text, additions which derive from an unidentified source, or from his own knowledge and experience. To the former category belong his anecdote illustrating the emperor Theodore I's generosity, his information that Alexios III made Leo Sgouros 'despot', and that Constantine Mesopotamites was forced to take the tonsure when he refused to crown Theodore Komnenos Doukas emperor.[407]

[401] Skout. 181.30; 182.10–16.

[402] For Skout.'s significance for earlier periods, see Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* I, 526–8; F. Dölger, 'Nochmals wer war Theophano?', *BZ* 43 (1950), 338–9; Oikonomides, 'Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067)', 101 n. 3, 123 n. 96. A random search produced the following accounts unknown from other historical narratives: the patriarch Xiphilinos' bakery for distributing bread to the poor (Skout. 166.21–6; Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 905, p. 388); the addition of a daughter, Eirene (Skout. 165.17), to the children of Constantine Doukas known from Skyl.

[403] On Pach.'s presentation of the period, see 71–5.

[404] Skout. 4.13–14.

[405] He writes *pinkernes* for *epi tou kerasmatos*, *kalyptra* for *pyramis*, *poreia* for *badon*, *pascha* for 'the day of Resurrection': at §48.5; §11.15; §43.1; §52.5. But he is not consistent: Skout. 524.6.

[406] See I. Ševčenko, 'Levels of style in Byzantine prose', *JÖB* 31/1 (1981), 289–312, here 309–13 for characterizations of the changes made to a text by a paraphraser/metaphraser; also I. Ševčenko, 'Additional remarks to the report on levels of style', *JÖB* 32/1 (1982), 228.

[407] See §18.12, §8.10, §21.4.

A great deal of the material he inserts into the *History* is, however, from his own experience. This is evident especially for the reign of Theodore II; in particular his report of Theodore II's second Bulgarian campaign, in the spring–summer of 1256, demonstrates first-hand knowledge. For a large number of events of the campaign he gives dates[408] which are additional to the narrative of Akropolites who actually accompanied the emperor. Skoutariotes also inserts into Akropolites' account of this campaign other details which betray a close knowledge of events. He describes the emperor's efforts to find the Cumans, rumoured to be nearby, by sending out a detachment of the army with a Cuman, Kleopas, and George Nestongos.[409] He knows the size of the emperor's army,[410] that the legates of the pope whom Akropolites was ordered to dismiss formally had come to see the emperor at Thessalonike,[411] and that the patriarch was in Thessalonike in order to celebrate the marriage of the emperor's daughter to Nikephoros of Epiros.[412]

A closer look at Skoutariotes' additions to Akropolites reveals that Skoutariotes had personal knowledge of Theodore II. He relates the dream Theodore saw in which St Tryphon encouraged the emperor to undertake his first Bulgarian campaign.[413] He describes Theodore's interpretation of a portent as a sign of the sultan's future defeat by the Tatars and his flight to the emperor's court.[414] He relates the manner of Theodore's death-bed confession,[415] and he gives a eulogy of the same emperor, commenting that he knew him and had personal experience of his intelligence and charm.[416] All this is not only additional to Akropolites' *History*; it is also an alternative view of the emperor, positive where Akropolites is neutral or negative.

Skoutariotes' alternative view is represented by his additions but also by his omissions. Passages in the *History* unfavourable to Theodore II and his father John III are omitted, as are statements favourable to Michael Palaiologos and his father Andronikos. The silences are sometimes broken by critical words for those praised by Akropolites and praise for those criticized by the same writer.[417]

From the additions and omissions it emerges that the author of the *Synopsis chronike* was sympathetic to the Laskarides of Nicaea and disaffected to the Palaiologoi. This polarization is complemented by the author's liking for Arsenios whom he claims to have 'attended closely for years'. He 'was with him day and night as one who lodged under the same roof and shared his

[408] §62.3; §63.22; §63.26, 31; §66.1; §67.3; §69.2.

[409] §61.10.

[410] §66.1. [411] §67.3.

[412] §67.3. See also at §61 for Skout.'s presence as a member of the patriarch's group of clergymen.

[413] Skout. 514.6–12; see the commentary at §55.7.

[414] Skout. 522.14–29. [415] See at §74.4. [416] Skout. 535.20–536.12.

[417] Omissions: §46.2, 6 (on Andronikos Palaiologos) but adds a negative comment; §52.19 (on John III's passion for women); §71.4, §80.7 (on Michael Palaiologos); §70.1 (on Theodore II). Substitution of praise for Akrop.'s criticism: §52.14; §52.17; §55.4; §63.22; §74.

deeds and wishes'.[418] It is from Arsenios that he learned of Theodore II's confession.[419]

Skoutariotes' views on the Laskarides and on Arsenios have much in common with a fourteenth-century hagiographical work, the Logos for Arsenios, found among the works written and owned by Philotheos, metropolitan of Selymbria. For both Skoutariotes and the author of the Logos, eulogy of the patriarch is connected with pro-Laskaris and anti-Palaiologan sentiments. The Logos and Skoutariotes also have material in common: both give a similar story of Arsenios' election as patriarch and both relate the same example of Theodore II's wisdom, his ability to understand signs from heaven.[420] Skoutariotes' *Synopsis* contains some of the stories about Arsenios which were in circulation before his death or shortly after and from which the author of the Logos could also have drawn.[421]

Thus, the author, who appears to his readers as an anonymous summarizer and paraphraser of earlier writers' works, emerges with a distinctive profile as a follower of the patriarch Arsenios.[422] As such, he represents a view which clashes with that of Akropolites, the man who was put in charge of punishing the Arsenites in 1267.[423] But his sympathy for Theodore II and for Arsenios also clashes with the ascription of the *Synopsis* to Theodore Skoutariotes, an attribution suggested by Heisenberg in the late nineteenth century. Heisenberg based his identification of the author of the *Synopsis* on two pieces of evidence: a sixteenth-century note by an abbot of the monastery of Dionysiou, in the codex Athous 3758, which states that Theodore of Kyzikos wrote a chronicle which begins with the creation of the world and ends with the reign of Michael Palaiologos; and a note in codex Marcianus 407, the manuscript which contains the *Synopsis*, which claims 'this is the book of Theodore of Kyzikos who comes from the family of the Skoutariotai' (*ἡ βίβλος ἥδε Κυζίκου Θεοδώρου, Σκουταριωτῶν ἐκ φυλῆς κατηγμένου*).[424]

Theodore Skoutariotes is known for his ecclesiastical positions and activity in the reign of Michael VIII. In 1270 the emperor conferred on the *epi ton*

418 Skout. 549.25–550.16, esp. 549.28–30. 419 §74.4.

420 On the Logos see Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period', 76–8. For the readings from the Bible used in the election, see §53.12; for the interpretation of the hawk and the eagle, see at §69.4.

421 For the relationship of the two works see Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the Palaiologan period', 77 and n. 74.

422 His identity is partly revealed also by additions to Choniates' *History* in which he shows a knowledge of Cappadocian topography and a relationship to the Sebastianoi brothers (great-uncles on his mother's side) who suffered under Andronikos I: see Chon. 34.8–10 (Skout. 205.20–206.4), Chon. 296.66–9 and apparatus, Chon. 309.20–2 and apparatus.

423 See above, 14.

424 See Heisenberg's review of Sathas' edition in *BZ* 5 (1896), 182–5; *idem*, *Analecta*, 5–16.

deeseon Theodore Skoutariotes the office of *dikaiophylax*.[425] In 1277 the *dikaiophylax* and *sakelliou* Skoutariotes signed the document accepting union.[426] Sometime after this date he was made metropolitan of Kyzikos; Michael VIII conferred the title of *hypertimos* on him as metropolitan[427] and sent him on an embassy to pope John XXI.[428] Skoutariotes was metropolitan until 1283 when he was deposed by a synod which met in the church of the Blachernai after the death of the emperor Michael.[429]

The author of the *Synopsis*, as shown above, was a churchman. He 'lodged under the same roof' as the patriarch Arsenios and accompanied the emperor on his 1256 campaign, together with the patriarch and a number of bishops who were present to celebrate the marriage at Thessalonike of Theodore II's daughter, Maria, to Michael II's son, Nikephoros.[430] In addition, the nature of many of his additions to Akropolites' text supports an ecclesiastical affiliation for the author.[431]

However, the fact that Skoutariotes prospered in the reign of Michael Palaiologos makes it difficult to attribute a work to him which is obviously pro-Arsenite and pro-Laskaris. Nevertheless, it was on different grounds that Kazhdan questioned Skoutariotes' authorship of the *Synopsis*. For Kazhdan, the note in the cod. Marc. 407 indicates ownership of the manuscript rather than authorship. Furthermore, in his view, the note in codex Athous 3758 saying that Theodore of Kyzikos wrote a chronicle is open to doubt as late testimony.[432]

[425] Zepos, *JGR*, I, Nov. 8, p. 502, Nov. 9, pp 503–4. On this appointment see J. Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ de l'église byzantine* (Paris, 1970), 109–10. On the context of this appointment, see Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 273.

[426] J. Gill, 'The church union of the council of Lyons (1274) portrayed in Greek documents', *OCP* 40 (1974), 5–45, here 28, 30.6–7 (repr. in Gill, *Church union*, no. v).

[427] MM V, 248–9.

[428] Michael VIII's (undated) letter to the pope refers to Skoutariotes as *metropolite Kisicensi ypertimo et exarcho totius Elisponti Theodoro.* See J. Gay, ed., *Les Registres de Nicolas III*, supplement (Paris, 1938), 77. For the embassy see W. Norden, *Das Papsttum und Byzanz* (Berlin, 1903), 578.

[429] Pach. III, 65.6–22.

[430] See at §64.1; §67.3.

[431] That is, he has knowledge of members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: §17.8, §21.4, 5, §33.7, §42.12 (omits criticism of Methodios), §49.31, §51.3 (omits criticism of Manuel II), §53.12, 13, 15 (knowledge of Arsenios' election), §67.3, §74.4 (knowledge of Theodore II's confession and of the metropolitan of Mitylene who was a 'familiar' of Theodore II), §80.5. He, furthermore, adds detailed information about the churches John III restored in Constantinople, on Athos, and in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria: *Additamenta*, no. 33, pp 286–8.

[432] A. P. Kazhdan, 'Ekserpti Skilitsi', *Izvestiia na Insituta za Istoriia* 14–15 (1964), 529–44, here 529–30; his doubts about authorship are repeated in *ODB* III, 1912–13. For Skoutariotes as an owner of manuscripts, see Constantinides, *Higher education*, 138–9, 145, 150; J.-L. van Dieten, 'Zur Überlieferung der *Panoplia Dogmatike* des Niketas Choniates, codex Parisiensis graecus 1234', in P. Wirth, ed., *Polychronion. Festschrift F. Dölger* (Heidelberg, 1966), 166–80; D. Harlfinger and D. Reinsch, 'Die Aristotelica des Parisinus gr. 1741', *Philologus* 114 (1970), 28–50.

Although the authorship of the *Synopsis* cannot be determined beyond any doubt on the basis of present knowledge, it is clear that it was the work of a man advanced in age:

> It is time now for us to stop the narrative here. For what follows are great events and numerous, and so too is the time needed to narrate them; for a great sea of matters has opened out, both worldly and those of the church. My mind is at a loss both because of old age and the present state of affairs but also because of the magnitude of things to be said, and my body grows numb, besieged by one illness after another but my hand also does not move to write . . . .[433]

Skoutariotes, deposed in 1283 as metropolitan, might have felt free after that date to express his pro-Arsenite and pro-Laskaris sentiments without compromising his position. The *Synopsis* was, after all, transmitted to us anonymously and purposely so, to judge from the author's words in the *prooimion*: 'I yield to the one who wishes to be called father of the book.'[434] He would not be the first author of historical narrative to write late in life, when no longer in office.[435]

Although the time of his writing[436] and even his identity are not certain, the author of the *Synopsis chronike* represents a body of opinion of an entirely contrary nature to that expressed by George Akropolites. He reveals in his work the views of the faithful subjects of the Laskaris dynasty, the Anatolian subjects[437] who kept alive the memory of John III, Theodore II, John IV, and the patriarch Arsenios.

George Pachymeres

Like the author of the *Synopsis chronike*, Pachymeres[438] was a churchman, the first to write a classicizing history since Leo the Deacon. Born in Nicaea in 1242, he was in his teens during the 1250s to 1261, the years of his historical

[433] Skout. 555.25–556.3.

[434] Skout. 3.9–10.

[435] See the comments of Mullett, 'The "other" in Byzantium', 5 and n. 26.

[436] A date after 1282 is a reasonable assumption, if Akrop.'s *History* was not in circulation until after his death in that year. Certainly the author of the *Synopsis* had a manuscript of the *History* which was not complete, for whatever reason. See at §89.11.

[437] Skout. therefore, not surprisingly, gives a much more detailed picture of the provisions of John III and Theodore II for Asia Minor, something which is missing from Akrop.'s account. See below, 88 and n. 570.

[438] On the author see Hunger, *Literatur* I, 447–53; Lampakis, *Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης*; Failler, 'Chronologie', 5–103, 'Chronologie', II, 145–249; Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 70–2.

narrative that overlap with Akropolites' account. Yet his work owes as little to Akropolites as Akropolites' *History* does to Choniates. Rather, it is with Skoutariotes that Pachymeres shows an affinity, both as a churchman and as an author who presents an alternative to Akropolites' 'empire of Nicaea'.

Concerned to give the background to Michael VIII's rule, Pachymeres necessarily also discusses aspects of the reigns of John III and, especially, Theodore II. In this he provides an account that differs greatly from Akropolites' *History*, in point of view and in information provided. Modern historians who have attempted to write narratives of the period have felt the need to choose one or the other author's version as the more trustworthy. It is Akropolites' word which is usually upheld, as he was an eyewitness to most of the events he narrates and knew Theodore II and Michael VIII well. Sometimes Akropolites' pronouncement on the importance of impartiality (§1.6) is also adduced as evidence of his reliability, while Pachymeres' even stronger statement on the same subject is ignored.[439]

A good starting point for an examination of the differences between the authors is a much-discussed event, Michael's trial for treason in 1253.[440] The treatments of Pachymeres and Akropolites diverge widely. It is not a matter of choosing one account over the other, however, but of juxtaposing their contrasting approaches to the same episode. Akropolites makes a showpiece of the trial, writing a long account, one of the longest in the *History*. It contains several speeches of Michael and ends with an encomium of him. In Akropolites' account the nature of the accusation is not clear. The author turns the potentially damaging episode into a criticism directed at the emperor John III and his right-hand man, the metropolitan of Philadelphia, Phokas. By contrast, Pachymeres has a succinct discussion of the affair which emphasizes the suspicion under which Michael was held, imprisoned 'in chains', 'for a considerable time'.[441] He does not describe a trial as such but reports that an accuser denounced Michael for making a secret pact with Michael II of Epiros, according to which he would marry the latter's daughter, give over to him the lands of the emperor, and share power with him.

Pachymeres' version of this event has points in common with Akropolites' narrative. In both accounts an accuser[442] refers to a possible marriage alliance of Michael Palaiologos: in Pachymeres, with Michael II of Epiros;

[439] Hunger, *Literatur* I, 449, is an exception. On Pach.'s *prooimion*, see Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 70.

[440] See the commentary on §50; also above, 61–2.

[441] Pach. I, 37.19–20, 39.2–3.

[442] Akrop. does not even make it plain which of the two men is the accuser. See the commentary at §50.10–16. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus*, 21, describes the conversation of the two men, which was the basis of the accusation, as 'vague', 'trivial'. It is purposely so.

in Akropolites, with the Bulgarian tsar. That the accusation against Michael did indeed concern a marriage alliance with an enemy of the emperor in the 'west' is borne out by the emperor John's actions after the trial: he transferred Michael from his post in the west to Asia Minor and he arranged a marriage for him with his brother's granddaughter (§51).

Historians have, however, found Pachymeres' version to be less convincing than Akropolites'.[443] Yet, Akropolites himself provides evidence that Pachymeres' account is closer to what happened. In §49, he gives an account of the expedition of John III against Michael II, a campaign occasioned by the latter's 'revolt' and 'conspiracy'. Akropolites never makes clear what this conspiracy was about. During John III's campaign, however, two of Michael II's key men, Theodore Petraliphas and Goulamos, defected to the emperor. John III took Vodena by siege and spent the winter encamped there. Immediately following this narrative, in §50, Akropolites relates that the emperor stopped at Philippi on the way back to the east, to examine the accusations against Michael Palaiologos which he had first heard at Vodena. The proximity of the references to Michael II's 'conspiracy' and to the accusations of Michael Palaiologos' disloyalty is strongly suggestive of a connection between the two. That Michael Palaiologos had made a pact with the greatest enemy of the 'empire of Nicaea' is not something we could ever learn from Akropolites' *History*. The eyewitness account is not always to be preferred.

Another point of correspondence between Pachymeres and Akropolites in their accounts of Michael's trial is the mention of his willingness to fight in single combat (*μονομαχεῖν*) to establish his innocence. Akropolites states Michael's readiness to do this but adds another element—the trial by hot iron suggested to Michael by Phokas. It is at this point that Akropolites reveals his presence and his privileged position: he 'heard the conversation'. Furthermore, only he heard it: 'Taking Michael Komnenos aside, he [Phokas] said . . .'. When Michael suggests that the metropolitan place with his own hands the red-hot iron in his hands, the metropolitan reveals that the 'method is barbarian . . . and put into practice by imperial order only'.

Akropolites alone mentions the red-hot iron in the trial of Michael. Akropolites alone appears to have heard the conversation in which the iron was suggested, implying that the barbarian practice was the emperor John's idea. In this way he discredits John III and his go-between, Phokas. Furthermore, Akropolites' readers knew that John's son, Theodore II, had applied the ordeal by iron in the cases of people he suspected of sorcery against him. The *History* contains no reference to Theodore's use of this ordeal. However,

[443] Failler, 'Chronologie', 11–12; Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus*, 21–6; Lampakis, *Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης*, 53 n. 71.

Pachymeres says that, as an adolescent, he saw with his own eyes people undergo the ordeal and emerge unharmed.[444] Akropolites, it seems, introduces this problematic practice into his version of the trial to associate John III and his son with barbarian methods, while showing Michael to be exemplary in his behaviour. Some of his readers would have known that Michael had promised to put an end to trial by the hot iron when he became emperor.[445]

Akropolites uses his eyewitness status to show his insider's knowledge of something that did not take place. Yet he includes the discussion of a trial by hot iron in order to display Michael's excellence, his calm and clever response, in contrast to the desperate efforts of the emperor and his advisor to find Michael guilty. An eyewitness report is not a guarantee of reliability.[446] Pachymeres makes us aware of this.

Pachymeres also brings to the reader's attention the anecdotes that were circulating in Constantinople, after 1261, about the emperors at Nicaea. Just as Michael's trial would have generated much discussion, so too other events produced 'talk' which needed to be addressed in order to set the record straight. One story, relating to the emperor John's concern for his subjects, is transmitted by Pachymeres to demonstrate the kind of upbringing Theodore II had. Once, when Theodore went hunting wearing gold, he chanced upon his father on his return and noticed that when he greeted him, his father made as if not to see him. Theodore, realizing that his father was angry with him, went to learn what the matter was. His father reproached him, saying

> What good have you consciously done to the Romans that you spill their blood in unnecessary pursuits? Do you not know that clothes of gold and silk are the blood of the Romans and should be put to their service, since they belong to them? You wish to know when? It is precisely when ambassadors come from abroad that we should show them the wealth of our subjects by wearing splendid garments.[447]

John III's concern for his subjects' wealth is illustrated also by other authors; it contributed to his saintly reputation among his subjects.[448] The story Pachymeres relates must have been known also to Akropolites. Akropolites'

444 Pach. I, 55.9–10.

445 Pach. I, 131.22–4.

446 See the discussion above, 39–41, on Akropolites' reliability.

447 Pach. I, 61.25–63.11. See above, 56–8, for the significance of stories in circulation for Akropolites' portrayal of the emperors.

448 Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 281; eadem., 'Saints and sainthood in the Palaiologan period', 69–71.

narrative appears as an attempt to 'reply' to this anecdote or another like it.[449] That this is the case is apparent from the statement he made in his 'obituary' for John III: 'Gifts he made less use of for his own subjects, but to foreigners, and especially to those who came as ambassadors, he extended a more open hand, that he might be praised by them' (§51.17). Out of the anecdote about John III's care to protect his subjects' wealth, he creates an emperor who is vain and parsimonious.

Pachymeres' account, further, adds a third dimension to Michael Palaiologos, missing from Akropolites' *History*. In Akropolites' work Michael is a literary construction: his speech is a string of topoi and other people describe him by means of topoi.[450] Pachymeres provides the substance behind Akropolites' cardboard figure. Where Akropolites describes Michael's accession to the throne as 'spring after winter', 'calm after the storm', 'joy after sadness', Pachymeres states, without metaphors, that Michael was generous to his subjects; he made gifts to them by helping himself to the public treasury and he later took back what he had given them. Where Akropolites describes Michael as the 'reluctant emperor', Pachymeres shows his long preparations for the throne, his buying of support and his silencing of opposition.[451]

Thus, Pachymeres' narrative in turn complements and contradicts Akropolites' account. Pachymeres shows us the other side of the emperors at Nicaea. It is he who reveals what the Laskarides did for Asia Minor: John III's scrupulous handling of his subjects' wealth, his generosity to his subjects and his provisions against the Tatars; Theodore II's upbringing and his illness which made him suspicious of his aristocratic subjects; the hypocrisy and oath-breaking of Michael VIII, his second arrest, his long attempt to take Constantinople, his responsibility for the murder of the Mouzalons, his disregard for the rights of the young John IV. It is Pachymeres who allows us to glimpse the criticism of, and dissatisfaction with, Michael.[452] He helps historians of the 'empire of Nicaea' understand how hard a task George Akropolites had in the making of Michael Palaiologos in his *History*.

[449] References in the *prooimion* (§1) to 'the indiscriminate flow of vulgar speech' and 'common report' show that Akrop. was aware of the (harmful) effect of stories in circulation. For this reason, he advocated the omission of 'common report' from the historical narrative. See §1.5.

[450] See above, 62–3.

[451] Pach. I, 137.18–139.19.

[452] John III's care of his subjects' wealth: Pach. I, 61–3; preparation for the Tatars: Pach. I, 27–31; illness of Theodore II: Pach. I, 53–7; Michael VIII's second arrest: Pach. I, 47–53; Failler, 'Chronologie', 16–20; long siege at Galata: Pach. I, 157–9, 171–7; murder of the Mouzalons: Pach. I, 81–9; Failler, 'Chronologie', 24–7.

OTHER WRITINGS

Akropolites is best known for his *History* but he also wrote occasional pieces and theological works. Some of his writing has been lost or destroyed. In 1283, the anti-unionists had his 'work' (σύγγραμμα) burned.[453] Pachymeres indicates that a theological work was destroyed, not Akropolites' 'oeuvre' as a whole. Yet other pieces have also been lost. Two are mentioned by Akropolites in his *History*: the 13 prayers for the entry into Constantinople on 15 August 1261, and the oration for Michael VIII in 1261.[454] Besides, there are surprising gaps in his surviving work. From this celebrated teacher of philosophy there is no commentary on Aristotle.[455] From the man who collected the letters of his student, Theodore II, writing prefatory verses to the collection, there are no letters or other works addressed to, or in honour of, this emperor. Equally surprising is the previously unknown work—an unpublished encomium for St George. This work belongs to a genre for which George's son, Constantine, is better known.[456]

The following list contains additions to and subtractions from the works attributed to George Akropolites and published by Heisenberg.[457]

Published works

(1) Verses for an icon of the Theotokos: Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 6–7.[458]
(2) Prefatory verses written for Akropolites' edition of Theodore II's letters:[459] Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 7–9.
(3) Funeral oration for the emperor John Doukas: Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 12–29.[460]

[453] Pach. III, 35.5–37.10; 36 n. 62. See also the discussion of this passage above, 32 and nn 187, 188.

[454] §85, §89.

[455] On Akrop. as a teacher, see above, 13–14. Pérez Martín, 'Le conflit de l'Union des Églises (1274) et son reflet dans l'enseignement supérieur de Constantinople', 412–13, suggests that Ambros. M71 sup (525), partly copied by Gregory of Cyprus, could have had its origins in a philosophical ms. of Akrop.

[456] Nicol, 'Constantine Akropolites', 254–6.

[457] Heisenberg, *Opera* II, *passim.*

[458] See also above, 21.

[459] For a discussion of the date of the edition of letters, c. 1250–2, according to Heisenberg (review of *Epistulae*, in *BZ* 9 (1900), 213–14), see above, 9–11.

[460] See the commentary at §52.15, 16, 22, 25. For analyses of the *epitaphios*, see V. Valdenberg, 'Notes sur l'oraison funèbre de G. Acropolite', *BZ* 30 (1929–30), 91–5; K. Praechter, 'Antikes in der Grabrede des Georgios Akropolites auf Johannes Dukas', *BZ* 14 (1905), 479–91.

(4) Two tracts on the Procession of the Holy Spirit: Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 30–66.[461] According to the lemma these were written while Akropolites was in prison (in Epiros: 1257–9).[462]
(5) Letter to John Tornikes: Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 67–9. Written after 1261, it is the only surviving letter by Akropolites.[463]
(6) An interpretation of Gregory Nazianzenos' Or. XXIX: Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 70–80.[464] This work, addressed to a member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy,[465] can be dated by the reference to Blemmydes as deceased (ἐκεῖνος).[466]
(7) Encomium of the apostles Peter and Paul: Heisenberg, *Opera* II, 81–111. Heisenberg enigmatically dates the encomium to 1274, the time of Akropolites' embassy to the council of Lyons, and claims that Akropolites wrote the piece for Marinos, archbishop of Eboli. These statements appear to be without foundation.[467]

Unpublished work

An encomium of St George: In a letter written in response to a request made by a friend, Constantine Akropolites mentions his father's encomium of St George and says that it is not available to him.[468] This work can be identified with a manuscript in the Lavra monastery.[469]

[461] For the theology of the pieces, see Richter, 'Des Georgios Akropolites Gedanken über Theologie, Kirche und Kircheneinheit', 279–99.

[462] §72.

[463] See K. Praechter, review of Heis., *Opera* II in *BZ* 13 (1904), 524–31, here 527, for reasons in support of Heisenberg's attribution of the letter to Akropolites. See above, 24, for the letter.

[464] See J. Dräseke, 'Neuplatonisches in des Gregorios von Nazianz Trinitätslehre', *BZ* 15 (1906), 140–60, here 156–8.

[465] *Opera* II, 70.5–6: *ὦ θειότατε καὶ σεβασμιώτατέ μοι κεφαλή*.

[466] *Opera* II, 71.2. For arguments in favour of Blemmydes' date of death in c. 1269, see Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 28.

[467] *Opera* II, xxi. D. J. Geanakoplos, 'Bonaventura, the two mendicant orders, and the Greeks at the council of Lyons (1274)', *Studies in Church History* 13 (1976), 193–4, suggests that Akropolites wrote the work on his return to Constantinople from Lyons, in order to encourage support of the unionist policy among the Byzantines.

[468] *Epistula* 96, ed. H. Delehaye, 'Constantini Acropolitae Hagiographi Byzantini Epistularum Manipulus', 263–84, here 274–5: Constantine informs the friend who asked for the encomium: 'I have none of my father's works.'

[469] Spyridon of Laura and S. Eustratiades, *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts in the library of the Laura on Mount Athos* (Cambridge, 1925), 46–7, no. 339 (1303), f. 213r: *Τοῦ μεγάλου λογοθέτου Γεωργίου τοῦ Ἀκροπολίτου ἐγκώμιον καὶ μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου μεγαλομάρτυρος Γεωργίου*.

Lost works

(1) Thirteen prayers written for the entry into Constantinople on 15 August 1261.[470]
(2) An oration for the emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos.[471]
(3) A theological work.[472]

Works of uncertain attribution

(1) Verses for the tomb of the empress Eirene Komnene (d. 1239): Heis., *Opera* II, 3–6.[473]
(2) *Sticheron*: Heis., *Opera* II, 9–11. Heisenberg's attribution of this work to Akropolites is based on the lemma: 'by the *megas logothetes* Akropolites'. Praechter suggested that the author is Constantine Akropolites who was also *megas logothetes*.[474] A sixteenth-century manuscript in the British Museum assigns authorship of the verses to Nikephoros Blemmydes.[475]
(3) Lexicon in political verse. A manuscript of the sixteenth century in the Bibliothèque nationale, suppl. gr. 1089, ff. 131, line 9–131v, attributes the work to George Akropolites. The same lexicon is found in another manuscript but without the name of an author attached to it.[476]

STUDIES

The conquest of Constantinople

Akropolites' source(s) for the conquest of Constantinople and its background are unknown.[477] His chronology is imprecise,[478] and his date for the conquest of Constantinople is wrong,[479] yet his presentation of the main events is, on general lines, in keeping with Niketas Choniates' eyewitness account.

[470] See §87.4, §88. [471] See §89. [472] Pach. III, 37.4–10.

[473] These were re-edited by Hörandner, 'Prodromos-Reminiszenzen bei Dichtern der nikänischen Zeit', 96–7. See the argument, above, 20, against the attribution to Akrop. Doubts about this attribution had already been expressed by K. Praechter, *BZ* 13 (1904), 526.

[474] K. Praechter, *BZ* 13 (1904), 526–7.

[475] Heis., *Opera* II, 9, apparatus.

[476] C. Astruc and M. L. Concasty, ed., *Catalogue des manuscrits grecs, Le Supplément grec* III/3 (Paris, 1960), 209; E. Miller, 'Lexique grecs inédits', *Annuaire de l'Association des études grecques* 8 (1874), 253.

[477] See above, 36. On Akropolites' presentation of the Fourth Crusade, in comparison with that of Choniates, see Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 145–50.

[478] See §3.9. [479] See §4.1.

Akropolites does, however, differ from Choniates in the emphases and interpretations he puts on events. He does not ascribe the fall of Constantinople to the sins of its inhabitants, or describe it as a punishment.[480] He does not pass judgement on the conquerors or their motives. Akropolites singles out the pope as the person responsible for the deviation of the armies, but without criticism, while Choniates includes Philip of Swabia and the Venetians, whom he vehemently condemns.[481] It is not clear whether Akropolites' detachment in reporting the conquest and its background is to be ascribed to his greater distance in time from the events or to a desire not to implicate the pope and the Venetians.[482]

Alexios III

Akropolites relates the emperor Alexios III's movements from the time of his flight from Constantinople in July 1203 (§2) to his death in Nicaea sometime after 1211 (§10). He is not always in agreement with Choniates and Villehardouin, whose narratives end in 1206 and 1207 respectively, and it is not always possible to reconcile the accounts or to establish the chronology of events, although several attempts have been made.[483] But Akropolites gives a fuller picture of Alexios than does any other single writer.[484]

Between July 1203 and late 1204 Alexios was in Thrace, where he had supporters.[485] In Mosynopolis, he received his daughter Eudokia and Alexios V but upon the advance of Baldwin, in the summer of 1204, he left.[486] It is certain that Alexios was in Thessalonike at some time thereafter,[487] that he married Eudokia to Leo Sgouros,[488] that Boniface sent him to Halmyros in Thessaly, having stripped him of his imperial insignia in 1205,[489] then to

[480] Cf. Chon. 579–82.

[481] Chon. 538.64–539.5.

[482] See above, 33–4.

[483] Vill. II, pp 117–18, n. 5; Loenertz, 'Aux origines du despotat d'Épire', 370–6; M. S. Kordoses, '*Ο έκπτωτος Βυζαντινός αυτοκράτορος Αλέξιος Γ Άγγελος στη Μακεδονία και Θεσσαλία*', *Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία* (Thessalonike, 1995), 165–9.

[484] For this see Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 146–50.

[485] Robert of Clari, §57; Vill. §266; Chon. 612.46–8. The families that helped Alexios come to power in 1195 were from the 'west'. The absence of western Thrace and parts of Macedonia from the *Partitio* shows that these regions remained loyal to Alexios III after Alexios IV was proclaimed emperor. See Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 16–17; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 440–2, 464–5.

[486] Akrop. §5; Vill. §273–4.

[487] Akrop. §8; Vill. §309; Chon. 619–20.

[488] Akrop. §8: in Corinth; Chon. 608: in Larissa.

[489] Chon. 612.

Montferrat,[490] that he was ransomed by Michael Komnenos Doukas,[491] and returned from exile sometime before 1210,[492] crossing to Asia Minor to fight his son-in-law Theodore Laskaris in 1211.[493]

Akropolites does not mention Alexios' exile or his loss of imperial insignia; however, his narrative shows that Alexios behaved all along as if he were still the sole legitimate emperor. Indeed, Akropolites shows more clearly than any other writer Alexios' determination to return to power in Constantinople.

This is strikingly confirmed, firstly, in his report of Alexios' flight from Constantinople; Akropolites adds a detail which is significant both for Alexios' imperial image and for his future actions. He claims that Alexios was heard to have said, 'David was saved by fleeing' (§2). Like earlier emperors, Alexios had heard himself compared to David in orations but with the difference that Alexios was said to be better than David because of his imperial blood.[494] Alexios' alleged statement is an example of an emperor's application to himself of the *synkriseis* heard in orations. In addition, taken together with other information from Akropolites and other sources, the statement shows that Alexios had every intention of returning to power. A picture emerges of a much more determined ruler than Choniates allows. Either Choniates' presentation of a feckless and cowardly Alexios must be re-evaluated[495] or Alexios had been changed by the events of 1203.

Secondly, Akropolites, more than Choniates or Villehardouin, shows that Alexios III considered Alexios V to have usurped power from him. Choniates comments that he does not know what made Alexios III blind Alexios V: he considers both men to have lost their claim to the throne when they left Constantinople.[496] Akropolites, however, gives Alexios III's motive: he 'loathed' Alexios Doukas 'for many reasons, not least because of his daughter'.[497]

[490] Vill. §309. Chon., 620.67–8, claims Alexios was sent to the 'ruler of the Germans' but a variant reading at 612.41–5 says that Boniface sent Alexios to Lombardy.

[491] Akrop. §8; Life of St Theodora of Arta, PG 127.904; ed. Moustoxydes, 43.

[492] The anonymous author of the chronicle of Gaeta says he saw Alexios and his wife passing through Gaeta on their way to Montferrat and returning, ransomed. See Riant, *Exuviae* I, 153. For author's date of writing sometime after 1210, see Riant, p. ic.

[493] Akrop. §9–10; *Libro de los fechos e conquistas del Principado de la Morea*, ed. A. Morel-Fatio (Geneva, 1885), §53.

[494] Chon., *Orationes*, 57.25–58.1. Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 269–82, here at 279. The anonymous paraphraser of Choniates' text compares Alexios' flight with David's. See van Dieten, 'Bemerkungen zur Sprache der sog. vulgärgriechischen Niketasparaphrase', 40 n. 3 and 60.172.

[495] In the earlier version of his *History*, Choniates presents Alexios less harshly and in a way which is more compatible with Akropolites' Alexios. See at §2.13 and Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 148–9.

[496] Chon. 608.56–60. He gives the length of reign of each man and a summation of their reigns immediately after reporting their flight from Constantinople: 547–8 and 571.

[497] Akrop. §5.9.

Having blinded Alexios V, a punishment inflicted by emperors on those guilty of conspiring to usurp imperial power, he proceeded to make a marriage alliance with Sgouros, an independent ruler who was fighting the Latins effectively,[498] and to attempt to eliminate his greatest rival among the Greeks, his son-in-law Theodore Laskaris who, in the meantime, had been proclaimed emperor in Nicaea.

Akropolites' account of Alexios' imperial behaviour is supported by other sources. Skoutariotes adds that when Alexios married Eudokia to Sgouros he bestowed on him the title of despot.[499] This was a title he had already given to Theodore Laskaris when he married Alexios' daughter, Anna, and it marked Theodore out as Alexios' heir to the throne.[500] By bestowing the title on Leo Sgouros, Alexios III was asserting his present and future imperial status but also signifying that he no longer considered Theodore Laskaris his man. Alexios III, furthermore, appears to have encouraged and supported other local dynasts in their bid for independent rule from the Latins. John Chamaretos, who held power in Lakonia, is referred to as despot in a letter dated to 1222. It has been argued that he was given this title by Alexios III, after Leo Sgouros' death in 1208.[501] Finally, the *Life* of St Theodora by the monk Job and the Aragonese chronicle of the Morea indicate that Alexios gave to Michael Komnenos Doukas recognition of his position as ruler in Epiros.[502]

Akropolites' presentation of Alexios III as *the* legitimate emperor—he omits the title when speaking of Alexios IV or Alexios V—and his longer narrative about him which incorporates an eyewitness account,[503] may derive from his interest in the man who was the great-grandfather of Michael Palaiologos.[504]

The foundation of the 'empire of Nicaea'

Akropolites' chronology for the foundation of Theodore Laskaris' rule in Asia Minor has created problems of interpretation, in particular, in the dating

[498] On Leo Sgouros, see §8.10.

[499] Skout. 453.27–8.

[500] See §5.6, and below, 82.

[501] Magdalino, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese', 316–23; cf. Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia*, 81–5.

[502] Magdalino, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese', 321–2, n. 32. See §8.12 and below, 95.

[503] This is indicated by Akrop. when he says, 'according to those who heard' (§2) and 'those who were present said' (§5). See above, 35–9, for a discussion of his sources.

[504] See §5.5; also above, 58. See Genealogical Table 2.

of Theodore's proclamation as emperor, and his conflicts with his rivals in Asia Minor.

Akropolites indicates that, in establishing himself in Asia Minor, Theodore Laskaris relied on his marriage connection to Alexios III. He used the title of despot (§7) which Alexios III had bestowed on him sometime after the death of the previous holder of the title, Alexios Palaiologos, and before Alexios III fled from Constantinople in July 1203.[505] Furthermore, Theodore tried to bring the cities of Bithynia under his control, 'to rule over them as emperor in the place of his father-in-law Alexios'. Villehardouin says of Theodore that he 'had as wife the daughter of the emperor whose land he claimed'.[506] The statements, taken together, can be interpreted as indications of cooperation between Theodore and Alexios[507] until 1205 when Alexios was captured by Boniface and stripped of his insignia. At the least, Theodore was using his connection to the sole living legitimate emperor to strengthen his position in the eyes of the people of Asia Minor. Initially, however, Theodore had difficulty in being accepted in Bithynia: 'he appealed', 'urged', 'entreated'. An oration for Theodore written by Choniates in 1206, which recounts earlier events, confirms this picture.[508]

By Akropolites' account, Theodore Laskaris left Constantinople with his wife and child before the fall of the city,[509] that is, in 1203, for Akropolites dates the fall of Constantinople to April 1203 (§4). Independent confirmation that Theodore had already established himself in Asia Minor, in the cities of Bithynia, by September of 1203, derives from the absence of these cities from the *Partitio Romaniae*.[510] Thus, when Akropolites says that 'after two years had passed' (§7) before Theodore's elevation to imperial status from that of despot, he implies a date of 1205,[511] not 1206, as Heisenberg and others have assumed.[512] However, Akropolites' statement that Theodore had reigned for

[505] See §5.5, 6; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 469.

[506] Vill. §313: *avoit la file l'empereor a fame dont il clamoit la terre.*

[507] See Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 148.

[508] Chon., *Orationes*, 131.12–132.6.

[509] *προεξελθεῖν πέφθακεν*: Heis. 10.15. The short chronicle of 1352 makes the same statement: Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken*, I, no. 8, p. 74. Choniates' orations show that Theodore was imprisoned when Alexios III fled the city (July 1203). He had escaped by late January 1204: see Chon., *Orationes*, 126.29–127.1, 131.7–8; Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 22–8; Lampsides, 'Wunderbare Rettung des Theodoros Laskaris durch den Erzengel Michael', 125–7.

[510] Oikonomides argues that the *Partitio* lists the parts of the empire which had participated in the last tax collection of September 1203, and that all the places missing from the list had defected from the rule of Alexios IV and were under the control of others. See Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 1–28, esp. 22–8.

[511] This date is confirmed also by an analysis of an oration by Choniates. See Sinogowitz, 'Über das byzantinische Kaisertum nach dem vierten Kreuzzuge (1204–1205)', 345–6; also Chon., *Orationes*, 129–47, and van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 151–2.

[512] Heis. p. 11 (margin). See too Sinogowitz, n. 511 above, 350, who discounts Akrop.'s chronology as untrustworthy, based on the idea that Theodore, according to Akrop., did not leave Constantinople until 1204.

18 years when he died (November 1221) would be correct only if one dates the beginning of his reign to 1203.[513]

Confusion occurs, however, when Akropolites conflates the occasion of Theodore's *proclamation* as emperor (in 1205) with his *coronation* by the patriarch Michael Autoreianos (in 1208).[514] Akropolites' narrative suggests that both events took place at the same time—'He crowned the despot Theodore with the imperial diadem'—two years after Theodore had established himself in Asia Minor, that is, in 1205. However, John Kamateros was still alive in 1205 and living in Didymoteichon, as Choniates confirms, until his death in May 1206.[515] Akropolites does not mention Kamateros' death, giving the impression that a new patriarch was elected immediately after Kamateros resigned.[516] In fact, however, some time after Kamateros' death the Greek clergy of Constantinople wrote to the emperor Theodore, asking him to convene a synod to elect a new patriarch. In response, the emperor summoned them to come to Nicaea during the third week in Lent to participate in the election (March 1208).[517]

Since, for Akropolites, proclamation and coronation (*ἀναγορευθείς*)[518] took place in 1205 when Theodore was still despot, he must be referring to the events of 1205 and not 1208, when he says, 'now that Laskaris had been proclaimed emperor, he applied himself to affairs more intensely'. The sequence of events Akropolites gives can be found also in Choniates' history and in an oration by the same: Theodore was proclaimed emperor; he proceeded to defeat his enemies.[519] The situation he describes in Asia Minor is one which pertained in 1205, and not 1208.[520] Another indication

[513] Cf. Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 26, who wrote before Theodore I's date of death had been revised from 1222 to 1221. For the date, see §18.5.

[514] For this date, see n. 515.

[515] Chon. 593.56–60; 633.57–9. On Kamateros in Thrace see P. Wirth, 'Zur Frage eines politischen Engagements Patriarch Johannes' X Kamateros nach dem vierten Kreuzzug', *BSl* 4 (1972), 239–52. For his death see Xanthopoulos, PG 147.464D; Laurent, 'La chronologie', 131–3.

[516] For his resignation, see Xanthopoulos, PG 147.464D; Grumel, *Regestes* I, no. 1202, pp 611–12.

[517] Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II, 25–35. In their (undated) letter, the clergymen refer to the death of the patriarch as having taken place 'long ago' (II, 28.10), while a report of a discussion on union of the churches held in September 1207 refers to his death as 'recent' (I, 52.25). For Michael Autoreianos' date of appointment see Xanthopoulos, PG 147.464D–465A; Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II, 3–12; Laurent, 'La chronologie', 129–33. P. Gounarides' ('*Ἡ χρονολογία τῆς ἀναγόρευσης καὶ τῆς στέψης τοῦ Θεοδώρου Α' τοῦ Λασκάρεως*', *Σύμμεικτα* 6 (1985), 59–71) attempt to redate the election of Autoreianos and the coronation of Theodore I to 1207 assumes a 1206 date for Theodore's proclamation, based on a misunderstanding of Akrop., and does not take into consideration the evidence from Xanthopoulos.

[518] See §7.6.

[519] Chon. 626.53–75; *Orationes*, 134.25–8; 137.14–138.7.

[520] This misunderstanding of Akrop.'s text occurs in Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 149, 234 n. 30; Orgels, 'Sabas Asidénos, dynaste de Sampson', 69 n. 1; Sinogowitz, 'Über das byzantinische Kaisertum', 350, 355 n. 5.

that Akropolites is referring to the earlier rather than the later date is the list of possessions he gives for the emperor Theodore in Asia Minor in §7. By 1206, Theodore no longer had control of the Maeander valley.[521]

Laskaris suffered many defeats in his early battles with the Latins which began in November 1204 at Pegai.[522] Within the theme of Opsikion and Aigaion, battles were fought at Poimanenon and Lopadion in December 1204,[523] and at Atramytion in March 1205.[524] Although no battles are recorded at Baris and Aulonia or at Lentiana for this time, places in the vicinity, such as Kyzikos and Pegai, were the site of heavy fighting.[525] In 1205 the Latins were in control of the northwest of Asia Minor (Opsikion and Aigaion)[526] and the territory opposite Constantinople (Thynia).[527]

In giving an account of Laskaris' 'Roman' rivals in Asia Minor, Akropolites describes them as *προύχοντες*, 'prominent men', who seized power for themselves, either on their own initiative or 'summoned to the defence of the land by its inhabitants'. Akropolites portrays this situation as one created by the 'confusion of the conquest' of Constantinople; however, some of the men he mentions were already in control earlier, in the years after Manuel I's death.[528] They had family interests in the areas where they seized power; in some cases, they are known to have held local office, usually of a military nature.[529]

Akropolites names only a few of the independent rulers here (§7), confining himself to Asia Minor, and later (§8), to mainland Greece.[530] A notable omission from his list is Theodore Maurozomes who was allied with Kaykhusraw I and overran the Maeander valley.[531] According to Choniates, the three main independent rulers in Asia Minor were Maurozomes, Theodore Laskaris and David Komnenos.[532] It was only after his defeat of Maurozomes that Laskaris had himself proclaimed emperor.[533]

Of the rulers mentioned by Akropolites, Morotheodoros or Theodore Mankaphas[534] is the one with the longest history of independent rule. He

[521] See below, 86.

[522] Vill. §304–5, §310, §312–13, §319–23; Chon. 602–3.

[523] Vill. §319–20; Chon. 602.91–5; *Orationes*, 132.7–8.

[524] Vill. §321–3; Chon. 603.31–604.48.

[525] Vill. §305, §319; Chon., *Orationes*, 132.7–8.

[526] See §7.9. [527] See §7.13.

[528] See Angold, 'Archons and dynasts: Local aristocracies and the cities of the later Byzantine empire', 236–53; Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 155 and n. 172, 491–2.

[529] Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 491–2, has suggested that the areas where independent rulers arose were also key positions in the Komnenian defence system.

[530] Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 468 n. 61, gives a list of 15 independent rulers in Asia Minor and Greece.

[531] Chon. 626.47–52. [532] Chon. 625.44–626.71.

[533] Chon. 626.53–6; Sinogowitz, 'Über das byzantinische Kaisertum', 348–51.

[534] See §7.17.

was a native of Philadelphia (modern Alaşehir), from a family whose members held important posts in the army. He himself may have been *doux* of the Thrakesion. In 1189 he had himself proclaimed emperor and minted silver coins in his name.[535] Isaac II put down the revolt in 1192 but by 1203 it would appear that Mankaphas was again operating independently, since Philadelphia is omitted from the *Partitio*.[536]

Although Akropolites mentions only Philadelphia under Morotheodoros' control, he later in the passage says that after Laskaris defeated Morotheodoros and Sabbas, he acquired Kelbianon, Maeander, Philadelphia, and Neokastra.[537] Since Sabbas is known to have been operating only in the Maeander region, it would appear that Kelbianon and Neokastra were also under Morotheodoros.[538]

Sabbas of Sampson is known only from Akropolites' account and from documents relating to the monastery of Xerochoraphion or Hiera, where he is referred to by his surname Asidenos. He had power in the *episkepsis* of Sampson (ancient Priene, near Miletos), at the mouth of the Maeander where he was a landowner.[539] He established himself as an independent ruler in 1204 and not earlier, since Sampson is listed in the *Partitio*.[540]

Laskaris' most serious rivals in Asia Minor were the grandsons of Andronikos I, David and Alexios Komnenos.[541] Akropolites gives prominence to David in his account and Choniates confirms in his *History* and orations that David was the brother with whom Theodore Laskaris came into conflict, calling him the 'forerunner and herald' of his brother Alexios who was never seen and confined himself to Trebizond.[542] David made the most of his imperial ancestry, referring to it in an inscription on the walls of Pontic Herakleia and on seals.[543] Akropolites states too that it was David (and not Alexios) who was first called Megas Komnenos. This is confirmed by a note on David's death

535 Chon. 399.54–60; Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 149. His coins were found at Aphrodisias (Stavroupolis): Hendy, *Studies*, 439.

536 Chon. 399–401; Cheynet, 'Philadelphie', 39–54.

537 See §7.20–2.

538 See Cheynet, 'Philadelphie', 52 and n. 84, for this argument, and below, 86.

539 See §7.18.

540 Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', map, p. 15; Carile, '*Partitio*', 218.23.

541 The 'grandsons of *kyr* Andronikos' are the only enemies of the emperor Theodore Laskaris mentioned by name in a *tomos* of 1208–10. See Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 123.32–6; 140–2, 144–5. See also, Chon., *Orationes*, 127.13–15; 135.32; 144.18–22; van Dieten, *Erlaüterungen*, 143, 152, 154–5.

542 Chon. 626.57–63.

543 See A. Bryer, 'David Komnenos and Saint Eleutherios', *Ἀρχεῖον Πόντου* 42 (1988–9), 161–88.

(1212) in an eleventh-century psalter at Vatopedi which refers to him with this epithet. After his death it was applied to rulers at Trebizond.[544]

The Komnenos brothers are thought to have taken Trebizond before the fall of Constantinople in April 1204, with the military aid of their first cousin Thamar, queen of Georgia.[545] The political status of Trebizond before the arrival of the brothers is not known. It is listed neither in the *Partitio*, nor in the chrysobull of 1198.[546] Like Morotheodoros and Sabbas, the Komnenos brothers had family connections in the region of their independent rule. Their grandfather Andronikos had been given a military command in Paphlagonia by his cousin, the emperor Manuel, while Andronikos' father, Isaac, had been banished to Pontic Herakleia in the reign of John II.[547]

In 1205–6, Laskaris checked David's westward advance to Nikomedeia, making Pontic Herakleia in Paphlagonia David's westernmost possession, while Alexios had control over Oinaion, Sinope and Trebizond.[548] It was not until 1214 that Laskaris had a decisive victory, gaining possession of Pontic Herakleia and Amastris. Akropolites, however, inserts this information later, in its chronologically correct position.[549] In §7 he reports victories over only Morotheodoros[550] and Sabbas.[551] These resulted in Laskaris' control of Kelbianon,[552] Neokastra,[553] and Philadelphia, and the Maeander valley. The inclusion of the latter is proof that Akropolites is limiting himself here to the events of 1205 for, in 1206, Laskaris made an agreement with Maurozomes, ceding to him Chonai, Laodikeia, and the Maeander valley.[554]

[544] On the epithet and its significance see N. Oikonomides, 'The chancery of the Grand Komnenoi: imperial tradition and political reality', *'Αρχεῖον Πόντου* 35 (1979), 321–2 and n. 2.

[545] See A. A. Vasiliev, 'The foundation of the empire of Trebizond (1204–1222)', *Speculum* 11 (1936), 3–37; C. Toumanoff, 'On the relationship between the founder of the empire of Trebizond and the Georgian Queen Tamar', *Speculum* 15 (1940), 299–312.

[546] Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 19–20.

[547] See Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 193, 219–20.

[548] Chon. 626.64–71; 638.69–639.73.

[549] See §11.1.

[550] No more is heard of Morotheodoros after this, although the family continued to be prominent in Philadelphia after Laskaris' victory over him. See references to Mankaphaina and Mankaphas in a *diataxis* of 1247 for the monastery of Boreine: *Actes de Vatopédi* I, 155.82, 155.87–8; also MM VI, 151–2, 204–5.

[551] A *prostaxis* of 1214 of the emperor Theodore I addressed to Sabbas as his *sympentheros* and *sebastokrator* shows that he was allowed to maintain a relatively powerful position in Sampson after Theodore defeated him. See Wilson and Darrouzès, 'Restes du cartulaire de Hiéra-Xérochoraphion', 14–15; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations,* 146, 469 n. 68.

[552] Kinn. 39.10–14; Chon. 368.33; Ramsay, *Historical geography,* 130.

[553] Chon. 150.35–54. See §15.

[554] Chon. 638.62–9.

Nicaea–Nymphaion

Akropolites delineates the topography of the Balkans to a far greater extent than that of Asia Minor. The landscape of the 'west' would have been well known to him through his participation in the long and intense campaigns of John III and Theodore II and his involvement in military operations as *praitor*. By contrast, the 'eastern parts' are less well represented in the *History*.[555] Nicaea and Nymphaion, Smyrna, Lampsakos, and Pegai feature most often. They are mentioned in his descriptions of the seasonal patterns of the emperors' movements, their military and naval operations, patriarchal elections, ceremonial on feast days, and imperial burials.

Until now Blemmydes' account has been accepted as providing the established picture of the seat of the empire. According to him, after the capture of Constantinople the patriarchal throne was transferred to Nicaea where an imperial residence was also built; John III, however, preferred to have the imperial residence at Nymphaion.[556] Indeed, Akropolites' references to Nicaea and Nymphaion appear to correspond to this division between the two places and the two emperors, Theodore I and John III. Theodore I established himself at Nicaea (§6) which was also the site of the assembly of 'notables and the select men of the church' who deliberate on his proclamation as emperor (§7). Theodore was residing at Nicaea before the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander in 1211 (§9). Alexios III, taken prisoner at the battle, was detained in the monastery of Hyakinthos at Nicaea (§10). He, his wife, and his father-in-law were buried at Nicaea (§18). John III, on the other hand, wintered at Nymphaion, as was his custom (§41, §47). He was residing in the vicinity at the time of the solar eclipse of June 1239 (§39). He celebrated Palm Sunday there in 1253 (§52). He, his wife, and his son were buried at Sosandra, in the region (§52, §74).

The references to Nicaea and Nymphaion thus fall into two parts, one relating to Theodore I, the other to John III. However, two passages in the *History* raise doubts about such a clear distinction and other sources also give evidence of a different situation. In 1211/12 the Latin emperor Henry went as far as Nymphaion, in his campaign against Theodore I, and 'from there he turned back' (§15). This suggests that Nymphaion already possessed some significance as an imperial residence.[557] The inference is supported by Xanthopoulos whose account of patriarchal elections in Theodore I's reign indicates that the emperor was absent from Nicaea and was in the Thrakesion

[555] The maps of Anatolia and the Balkans, xxi and xxii, illustrate this point clearly.

[556] *Autobiographia* I, §12: τὴν ἀνακτορικὴν σκήνωσιν.

[557] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 471, suggests that the Latin emperor's actions were intended to humiliate Theodore I and/or to express his contempt for him.

theme on two occasions in winter.[558] Likewise, an analysis of Blemmydes' movements in western Asia Minor shows that John III was at Nymphaion in 1221, at the very start of his reign.[559] Thus, Nymphaion was more than a winter residence for John III. It had already become a residence under Theodore I.[560] Akropolites' statement at §84 can be taken, then, as literal truth: 'Nymphaion, which was the customary place of relaxation of the emperors from the time when they were banished from the city of Constantine'.

The mild climate of Nymphaion[561] made wintering there pleasant. Akropolites shows that it had the advantage of being a well-watered rich agricultural area.[562] He indicates, furthermore, its importance in its proximity to the border with the Turks.[563] Akropolites does not, however, mention a third element which made imperial residence at Nymphaion practical and significant—the presence there of the mint and treasury.[564]

Nicaea continued to be the patriarchal seat and is thus mentioned by Akropolites in connection with patriarchal elections and coronation. The city was likewise the place of John III's wedding to his second wife, Constanza-Anna, according to Theodore II.[565] However, for Theodore II, Nicaea held a special significance, both before and during his reign. In an encomium of Nicaea, written late in his father's reign, Theodore II expresses his high regard for that city, its citizens and its position of mastery over all the cities.[566] Theodore founded a school at Nicaea in the church of St Tryphon which he rebuilt and he took personal interest in the teachers and pupils.[567] The patron saint of Nicaea, St Tryphon, appeared on his coins shortly after Theodore attributed his victory in a campaign to the saint's help.[568] Theodore's orientation towards Nicaea is an aspect of this emperor's reign which finds no place in the *History*. On the contrary, Akropolites relates with disapproval the emperor's preference for 'new men' from Anatolia.[569] It is rather from the writings of Theodore Skoutariotes and George Pachymeres that we learn about Asia Minor.[570]

[558] PG 147, 465AB. See Hendy, *Studies*, 444–5.

[559] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 471.

[560] Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 235.

[561] Holobolos, ed. Treu, I, 48.29–32.

[562] §39.5, §52.10.

[563] §53.3.

[564] Pach. I, 97.21–6; Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 231–5.

[565] 'Satire against his teacher', *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 191.908–12.

[566] Ed. Tartaglia, 68–84, esp. 81–3. See also Foss, *Nicaea*, 132–53, esp. 150–2.

[567] *Epistulae*, 271–6; Skout. 512.3–11 (=*Additamenta*, no. 35, p. 291.6–15); Constantinides, *Higher education*, 19–20.

[568] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 516. See §55.7 and Skout. (512.3–11; 514.6–12); letter to Mouzalon, *Epistulae*, 245.41–246.3.

[569] Puech, *L'Aristocratie et le pouvoir à Byzance au XIII^{e} siècle*, 344–6, 388–94, argues for Theodore II's marked choice of Anatolian families over Constantinopolitan aristocracy as a means of providing a counterweight to the threat which Michael Palaiologos posed.

[570] Above, 65–75. Skout. gives information about the topography (see 530.12–29), and the provisions of John III and Theodore II for their Anatolian subjects. See, e.g. Skout. (502.14–18) for John's measures in preparation for a Tatar attack. See also Pach. I, 27–31 and below, 91 and n. 588.

The Latins

Akropolites is sparing in his account of the westerners whom he calls interchangeably 'Italians', 'Latins', or 'Franks' and who occupied large areas of the former Byzantine empire after 1204.[571] Although he grew up in Constantinople under the Latins, leaving for Asia Minor in 1233, at the age of 16, he gives only one direct indication of this experience when he says that he saw John of Brienne and attests to his huge physique and advanced age (§27). At some time, probably in the 1240s, Akropolites went on an embassy to Constantinople.[572] Again this first-hand contact does not appear to have contributed to any aspect of his narrative on the Latins. Instead he reports in greatest detail on Latin affairs before his birth, that is, the reign of the emperor Henry and his good treatment of his Roman subjects (§15, §16, §17). Ecclesiastical matters are restricted to cardinal Pelagius' embassy (§17) and a passing mention of papal ambassadors (§67). Marriages with the Latins of Constantinople, both those merely proposed—between Theodore I's daughter, Eudokia, and Robert of Courtenay—and also those effected—between Theodore I and Robert's sister (§18)—are touched on. Akropolites is, however, completely silent about John III's alliance with Frederick II.[573] The latter's daughter Constanza is simply called John III's 'German wife' (§52). Similarly, Akropolites does not show directly how many or how serious were John III's attacks on Constantinople.[574] It is from Skoutariotes that we learn of this emperor's contact with the Latins in Constantinople, his donations to restore churches in the capital and elsewhere.[575]

Akropolites emphasizes two characteristics of the westerners: their hatred of the Romans (§36, §37, §76)[576] and their lack of perseverance in battle (§15). The latter is a judgement repeated by other Byzantine writers of historical narrative but also found in Byzantine military treatises. It could, nevertheless, be based on Akropolites' direct observation and experience.[577]

[571] Angold, *The Fourth Crusade*, 117, commenting on how little Akropolites has to say about the Latin empire, considers that the perspective of 1261 made the Latin empire seem 'an aberration'. But see below, 92–4, on the Turks.

[572] See above, 10.

[573] See at §52.19; Martin, 'Frédéric II, l'empire de Nicée et le "césaropapisme" ', 473–83.

[574] See below, 100.

[575] Ed. Sathas, 508.24–509.11 (=*Additamenta*, no. 33, pp 287–8).

[576] For the same characterization, see his tract on the Holy Spirit, Heis., *Opera* II, 64.24–7; Magdalino, 'Hellenism and nationalism in Byzantium', 17–18.

[577] However, Akrop. makes the same comments about the Bulgarians: see, below, 90–1. For the military treatises, see the *Strategikon* of Maurice, ed. Dennis, 370.25–35; also the discussions of J. Shepard, 'Uses of the Franks', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 15 (1992), 275–305, here 293; G. Dagron, ' "Ceux d'en face": Les peuples étrangers dans les traités militaires byzantins', *TM* 10 (1987), 207–32, here 214.

In his references to the Latin emperors, Akropolites uses periphrastic expressions to describe their imperial status, referring only to Baldwin I as 'the emperor Baldwin' (§13) but otherwise never mentioning the name of a Latin ruler together with the title of emperor. In this way he appears to withhold acknowledgement of their status as emperor.[578]

The *History* contains accurate and precise information about a number of Latin matters, their rulers, the terms of their agreements. Akropolites' description of individual Latin rulers finds in each case a parallel in a Latin source. Henry 'even though a Frank by birth, behaved graciously to the Romans' (§16), is a view attested to also by Henry de Valenciennes and popular Greek tradition. The podestà in 1259–61, Marco Gradenigo, whom Akropolites calls 'an energetic man and bold in matters of war' (§85) is likewise so described in Latin sources. Further, Akropolites displays knowledge of the wording of (Latin) documents when he relates the terms of John of Brienne's agreement with the barons of Constantinople (§27).[579] He also shows the significance of land-holding for the Latins (§27, §78) and their association of titles with land, when he says of the doge of Venice he 'was honoured with the dignity of despot which entitled him to have a quarter and half a quarter of the whole' (§8). This formulation is found in documents which refer to the doge or the podestà as *dominus/dominator* and despot together with the territorial extent of their authority.[580]

The Bulgarians

Akropolites had first-hand knowledge of Bulgarian affairs through three different kinds of contact: his participation in the campaigns of Theodore II in 1254–5 and in 1256 (§55–60, §61), his work in drafting and administering the treaty of 1256 (§63), and his embassy to Constantine Tich in Trnovo, December–January 1260–1 (§84).

For the Bulgarians, as also for the Latins, Akropolites notes two characteristics: their enduring hatred of the Romans, both as a people (*φυλή*, *γένος*) and as individuals (§54, §58, §73), and their lack of perseverance in warfare (§57). In addition, to the Bulgarians he ascribes a lack of ability in

[578] E.g. 'Baldwin, the first of them to rule in Constantinople, was directing their affairs as emperor' (§13); 'When this Henry ruled the city of Constantine' (§17); 'Baldwin who reigned as emperor in the city of Constantine' (§37); 'Baldwin, who was ruling there, supposedly as emperor' (§78).

[579] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 659–60, remarks on the emphasis on land and its possession in the agreement and its implications for the Latin empire of Constantinople.

[580] TTh II, 205–6 (1219): *quarta pars et dimidia ejuisdemque Imperii*. See at §8.5.

siege warfare (§13). Because Akropolites had first-hand experience of the Bulgarians, as of the Latins,[581] his readers assume that his general statements about these peoples are based on observation.[582] This supposition is, however, weakened by the fact that Akropolites notes exactly the same characteristics for the Latins as he does for the Bulgarians. Furthermore, when he says of the Bulgarians that they have no skill in siege warfare, he offers this as an explanation for Kalojan's abandonment of a siege at Adrianople in 1206. He does not repeat the statement for warfare in his own times. Yet in 1206, the reason for Kalojan's sudden departure from the siege was his lack of manpower. Both Villehardouin, a contemporary and eyewitness, and Skoutariotes attest to this.[583] Furthermore, both Choniates and Villehardouin show that at the siege of Varna (1201), Kalojan was capable of conducting siege warfare.[584] Thus, Akropolites appears to be imposing on the event an explanation drawn from a stereotype, not from experience. As in the case of his generalizations about the Latins, it seems likely that his comments here are based on topoi for foreign enemy people.

Akropolites recounts Bulgarian affairs from the uprising of 1185—the foundation of the 'Second Bulgarian Empire'—until 1261. For early events which overlap with the narrative of Choniates' *History*, Akropolites had an unknown source or sources and did not use Choniates' account. There are many basic differences between them: the Vlachs are nowhere mentioned by Akropolites for their part in the uprising (§11); Akropolites gives Asan the leading role in the early years of Bulgarian independence, rather than his brother Peter (§12). Akropolites is the only author to list the booty taken by the Bulgarians in Isaac II's disastrous campaign of 1190/1 (§11). He is the only Greek source to allude to the contemporary attribution of John's death to St Demetrios (§13). While Akropolites never refers to the name Kalojan or Ioannitzes by which John was known on coins, in documents, and in Greek and Latin sources, he is the only source to mention John's name for himself, 'the Romanslayer', and the Romans' name for him of 'Skyloioannes' or 'Dog John' (§13). Further, he makes an implicit comparison of this Bulgarian with khan Krum (§13). Constantine Akropolites, George's son, hands down the tradition of names for John, in his hagiographical work for St Demetrios.[585]

Of all the Bulgarian rulers, Akropolites shows the highest regard for John II Asan (1218–41) who, like Asan (1185–96), and John, his brother

[581] See above, 10, 14–15, 23.
[582] See Hunger, *Literatur* I, 444.
[583] See at §13.13.
[584] Chon. 532–3, 632 (at Didymoteichon, 1206); Vill. §442, §461, §472.
[585] See at §13.10, 19, 20.

(1197–1207), is called 'emperor of the Bulgarians' or 'ruler of the Bulgarians'. But, in addition, Akropolites refers to John II Asan as *autokrator* ('monarch') when he mentions the marriage connection of John III Vatatzes with the Bulgarian ruler (§34). His special treatment of this ruler would seem to derive from the 'treaty of cooperation' and the marriage alliance Asan made with the emperor at Nicaea, but also from his good reputation among Romans and Bulgarians. Akropolites twice refers to Asan's compassionate treatment of his subjects, once in a summary account of his reign upon his death (§25, §39). He thus ascribes to this foreign ruler a Byzantine imperial trait and also shows his special status by providing an obituary notice for him (§39), something he otherwise does only for Byzantine emperors.

In Bulgarian political affairs, as in those of the Romans, Akropolites shows that kinship through marriage is the single most important consideration. Alliances through marriage are the explanation for military cooperation and also the means of legitimizing a claim to the throne.[586]

The Turks

Of the three main enemies of the 'empire of Nicaea' it is the Turks—called 'Persians', 'Muslims' (§65, §69), 'descendants of Hagar' (§38)[587]—who receive the shortest treatment. Akropolites' references to them are related to the emperors' concern for the security of their eastern frontier, embassies sent to the frontier, and asylum-seeking sultans and Romans.

The *History* gives some indication of the succession of sultans at Iconium, introducing their honorific names, in Greek transliteration, into the narrative when Turkish affairs are mentioned. Thus Akropolites makes reference to 'Iathatines' (Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw I, 1192–6, 1205–11: §8, §9, §10), 'Azatines' (Ala al-Din Kaykubad I, 1220–37: §41) and his son 'Iathatines' (Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw II, 1237–45/6: §41). He also mentions the 'sultan' whom he never names, Izz al-Din Kaykaus II (1246–61: §53, §61, §64, §65, §69). This last sultan received Michael Palaiologos when he fled to the Turks and was in turn taken in by Michael when he fled to the 'empire of Nicaea' in 1261.[588] Only in the case of two rulers, Kaykhusraw II and his father

[586] For the significance of kinship in the *History*, see above, 53, 55. For Bulgarian kinship: §13.21 (John with the Cumans), §24 (Sthlavos with the emperor Henry's daughter), §25 (Manuel Komnenos Doukas with John II Asan's daughter), §38 (Theodore Komnenos Doukas' daughter with John II Asan), §31, §33 (John III's son, Theodore, with Asan's daughter, Helen), §73 (Kaliman with Michael's wife), §73 (Constantine Tich with Theodore II's daughter).

[587] Akrop. uses the word 'Turk' to define individuals: §71, §81.

[588] For the date and the place of his refuge, see Failler, 'Chronologie', 54–5.

Ala al-Din Kaykubad I, does Akropolites give characterizations. In doing so, he follows the tradition of Byzantine authors writing about Muslims, presenting both father and son as licentious, even if the father was less so (§41.8).

The *History* contains a long and detailed account of Theodore I's battle against Kaykhusraw I at Antioch-on-the-Maeander in 1211 (§9, §10). Akropolites thereafter gives the impression of a long period of peaceful coexistence with the Turks, after the 'inviolable' truce of 1211 (§10). He refers to the renewal in 1243 of the agreement which the 'Nicaeans' and the Turks had 'from before' (§41.10).[589] The only hint of any hostility is in his description of the people of Philadelphia who live on the boundaries with the Persians which 'causes them always to be fighting with the enemy and makes them familiar with war' (§53).

Akropolites repeatedly remarks on the emperors' concern for the security of their eastern frontier when they are fighting in the western territories (§36, §41, §53, §66, §67). He also shows John III and Theodore II sending embassies to the frontier at Philadelphia–Tripolis (§41, §53, §61). These mentions of concern and contact are always in the context of the Tatar threat. However, it is Skoutariotes and Pachymeres who recount the provisions made by both emperors for security against Tatars.[590]

Although Akropolites gives only a summary mention of Turkish–Nicaean relations, he is well informed on specific events, both early and late in his narrative. His account of Iathatines' reception in Constantinople before 1204 is corroborated by a Seljuk chronicle and by Ibn Bibi. Both show Alexios III to have been welcoming and to have entered into spiritual kinship with the sultan (§6.6, §8.19, 20). This report contrasts sharply with Choniates' narrative of the same event.[591]

Likewise, Akropolites has information about Michael Palaiologos' flight to the Turks in 1256 which is otherwise to be found only in a Persian source. Akropolites relates that Michael left the scene of the battle of Aksaray with a

[589] Langdon, *Imperial offensive*, *passim*, argues that in 1225–31 John III engaged in a 'crusade' against the Turks. He points to various sources, including Akrop.'s funeral oration for the emperor, which allude to wars against the Turks: 'The Persian loves peace . . . he has suffered much in various oppositions and lost many of his retainers and the most distinguished men' (*Opera* II, 18.14–25). While there can be little doubt that there was more hostility than Akrop. reports in the *History*, it is questionable whether this fighting constituted a 'crusade' against the Turks.

[590] Skout. 504.14–23. In February 1254 the emperor John stayed in Nicaea 'because of fear of the Tatars' and made preparations for its protection and safety. For Theodore, see Pach. I, 187.11–189.30. On both authors' greater portrayal of the concerns of the Anatolian subjects of the emperors, see 71 n. 437, 88 n. 570.

[591] For the differing accounts of Alexios III in Chon. and Akrop. see Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 146–50.

beglerbeg and that they both went to Kastamon where the latter lived. Aqsarayî, a fourteenth-century chronicler, names the beglerbeg as Tavtaş of Kastamon, and reports that Michael was given the title of beglerbeg and the fortress of Kastamon by the sultan Kaykaus II in 1258, after Tavtaş' death. Kastamon, originally the home of the Komnenoi, thus returned, if only briefly, to Michael Komnenos.[592] It is perhaps also for this reason that upon becoming emperor in 1259 Michael sent his half-brother Constantine to Paphlagonia, 'to inspect the cities there and the army and the fortresses' (§77.16).

Akropolites relates not only Michael Palaiologos' refuge among the Turks but also that of Manuel Komnenos Doukas in 1237 (§38). He states that Manuel's brother Theodore exiled him to Attaleia and that the Turks helped Manuel to reach John III. This brief episode in the *History* shows that the Komneno-Doukai, and, more specifically, Theodore, had good relations with the Turks. References in other sources reinforce this point. Theodore Komnenos Doukas was said to have lived among the Turks before he left Asia Minor for Epiros (§38.9) and when Alexios III sought out the help of Kaykhusraw I in 1210–11, he left Epiros for Asia Minor in the company of Constantine, brother of Theodore and Michael I of Epiros (§9.1).[593]

The Epirots

Like the Latins, Bulgarians and Turks, the 'Epirots' also are enemies of the 'empire of Nicaea' and, of the four enemies, it is they who receive the greatest attention from Akropolites. For Akropolites, to be a Roman is to be with, and on the side of, the emperor at Nicaea. Thus, to begin with, Theodore Komnenos Doukas was 'with the emperor of the Romans, Theodore Laskaris, serving him, just like the rest of the Romans' (§14). In 1217 when Theodore Komnenos Doukas ambushed and captured Peter of Courtenay, 'this was a great help to the Romans . . .' (§14). But when Theodore showed that he 'was not willing to remain in his proper place, but appropriated the insignia of imperial office' (§21), this act made him and his subjects enemies of the Romans. In 1246 when Thessalonike came into the possession of John III, the city became subject 'to the Romans, for those who had ruled her were opposed to the Romans' (§45). In describing the 'revolt' and 'conspiracy' of

[592] Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks in the thirteenth century*, 42–68.

[593] The first member of the family to establish contact with the Turks was Michael I who, according to Chon. (529.18–24), had rebelled against Alexios III in 1200 when he was a tax collector in Mylassa and, with the help of Rukn al-Din's troops, had ravaged the cities along the Maeander.

Michael II and his uncle Theodore, Akropolites reveals that the emperor John 'considered no others to be enemies of the empire of the Romans after the conquest of the city of Constantine, if not they' (§49). The Epirots are not Romans; they are 'the western race', 'the inhabitants of the western parts' (§80).

Akropolites had personal reasons to dislike the Epirots. He was taken prisoner by Michael II and was held for two years, probably at Arta (§72). Yet his statements about the Epirots do not appear to be related to this experience.[594] Rather, in his narrative of Epirot affairs, Akropolites displays the 'Nicaean' attitude. The rulers of Epiros break their oaths (§25, §38, §49), assume (usurp) imperial power (§21, §26, §40), and are ignorant of Roman customs and traditions (§21). Akropolites also gives expression to their status from the Nicaean point of view more subtly in his naming practices.[595]

The origins of the state which is erroneously but conveniently called the 'Despotate of Epiros'[596] are unclear. Akropolites does not explain how Michael, the 'first cousin' of Alexios III, came to have control over 'a part of Old Epiros' (§8). However, all other sources, including the only surviving narrative account which presents the Epirot point of view, the *Life* of St Theodora of Arta, relate that Michael was summoned to rule there. The *Life* also relates that Alexios III gave Michael official recognition of his position.[597] This statement, which serves to legitimize him and his successors,[598] finds some confirmation. Other sources reveal that Alexios, after 1204, bestowed the title of despot on two local dynasts in the Peloponnese, Sgouros and Chamaretos, thus at the same time confirming their independent rule and his status as sole legitimate emperor.[599] Alexios might also have given his first cousin Michael approval of his position without, however, bestowing a title on him.

Although Akropolites gives no background to the foundation of Michael's authority in Epiros, he does give expression to its separate nature in his description of Michael's lands. He relates that Michael ruled over 'Epiros and a part of the land of the Romans' (§14), implying that Epiros was not a part of the territory of the Roman empire.[600] Later sources do indeed give the

[594] He expresses much stronger emotions with regard to particular Romans. See above, 26, 40–1.

[595] See the discussion above at 41–2.

[596] Stiernon, 'Les origines du Despotat d'Epire', 90–126; Ferjančić, *Despoti*, 49–58; Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267–1479*, 1–4.

[597] Ed. Moustoxydes, 42–3; PG 127, col. 904. See §8.12.

[598] Patlagean, 'Une sainte souveraine grecque', 453–60, here 455.

[599] See 81. Magdalino, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese', 316–23, esp. 321.

[600] This is not, however, the case at §80 where he makes a distinction between Old and New Epiros and 'our Hellenic land'. See the commentary at §80.4.

impression that Epiros was held by Michael's ancestors from the emperor in Constantinople and that in 1204, with the confusion that followed the Fourth Crusade, Michael set up independent rule there as others did elsewhere. Kantakouzenos claims that the Angeloi had been established in Epiros before 1204 and held an annual command from the emperor, but usurped power after 1204.[601] Pachymeres relates a discussion between Michael II and the emperor Michael VIII in 1263 concerning the emperor's right over Thessaly, since it once belonged to the empire. Michael II argued that his ancestors had won Thessaly from the Latins with their toil and blood and left it as an inheritance to their children; therefore he could not rightly hand it over.[602] Epiros is not even mentioned. It seems to be exempt from the arguments offered by Michael II in the case of Thessaly. It would seem that Epiros was considered a special case.[603]

A great deal of Akropolites' account of the Epirots has to do with their assumption of the titles of emperor and despot and the efforts of the emperors at Nicaea to take these away from them and to bestow their own titles on them (§26, §40, §42, §49). Two cases, in particular, have been much discussed: Manuel Komnenos Doukas' position in Thessalonike after his brother's defeat and imprisonment by Asan in 1230, and the source and date of Michael II's title of despot.

Based on Akropolites' narrative of Manuel's behaviour after 1230, modern historians have considered Manuel to have had 'imperial pretensions': he signed with red ink, although he was only a despot.[604] The Nicaean ambassador mocked him, citing the Sunday vesper hymn, stating that it was more apt to call Manuel '*basileus* and *despotes*' than Christ (§26.4). Manuel had been made despot by Theodore before 1230, probably in the 1220s after Theodore was proclaimed emperor (§21). Manuel still held this title in 1234 (§26.3). But Manuel did not merely have imperial pretensions. He actually had the title of *basileus*, as Akropolites' reference to the hymn shows. The words of the hymn were more fitting for Manuel because he held both titles. A *basileus* would be addressed as *despotes* for this is part of his title, but Manuel held both titles separately. This interpretation of Akropolites' statement is corroborated by letters and documents (§26.4). Furthermore, Manuel issued coins on which he was called *despotes*, the standard imperial designation on coins. After his coronation Theodore Komnenos Doukas had likewise issued

[601] Kant. I, 520.15–521.2.

[602] Pach. I, 271.20–273.1, 275.1–14.

[603] There is, however, no evidence that Michael I's father, the *sebastokrator* John Doukas, had anything to do with Epiros.

[604] Stavridou-Zaphraka, *Νίκαια καὶ Ἤπειρος*, 84; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 566–7.

coins on which he was called *despotes.*[605] Thus, although Akropolites presents the 'Nicaean view' of the 'westerners', mocking their imperial pretensions, he at the same time shows that Manuel held the title of emperor.

Michael II appears as despot for the first time in Akropolites' narrative at §46, in 1246, years before the marriage alliance between Michael and John III (§49) in 1248–50. The latter is the occasion usually associated with the bestowal of the title on Michael and his son Nikephoros by John III. Akropolites' early reference to Michael II as despot is puzzling, therefore, and, if it were not for Akropolites' care with titles, we might discount its significance. However, Michael's charter for the monastery of Makrinitissa, dated May 1246, also refers to him as despot.[606] Furthermore, an official in the Palaiologan chancery prefaced the text of the document with the explanation that at the time Michael issued it 'he had already received the title of despot from the imperial authority'.[607] From the point of view of someone living in Constantinople after 1261, the 'imperial authority' could only be the emperors in Anatolia and not the Komneno-Doukai. On the basis of this statement, one would have to conclude that Michael received the title of despot from the emperor John III before May 1246, that is, before this emperor's conquest of Thessalonike in November–December 1246.[608]

The rivalry and hostility of Nicaea and Epiros is manifested also in Akropolites' account of the families whose allegiances were divided between the two states. The first and most prominent example is that of Michael I of Epiros and his brother Theodore who was 'serving the emperor Theodore' before he joined Michael (§14). Theodore Petraliphas, brother of Michael II's wife and also allied with Michael II, was son-in-law of Demetrios Tornikes, the emperor John III's administrator of public affairs (§49). He defected to the emperor John in 1252/3 only to return again to Michael II's side (§80.3). Finally, John and Theodore, the two brothers of Constantine Kabasilas, archbishop of Ochrid under Theodore II, were with Michael II of Epiros (§80.5, 6). It was for this reason that Theodore II confined Constantine, suspecting his loyalty.

The army

Matters of war dominate the *History*[609] but it is especially from 1246, when Akropolites started to accompany the emperors of Nicaea to the 'west', that he

[605] Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 568; Ferjančić, 'Solunski car Manojlo Andjeo (1230–1237)', 93–101.

[606] MM IV, 345–9.

[607] MM IV, 346.

[608] For this view see also Barišić, 'Diplomatar Tesalijskich manastira Makrinitisa i Nea Petra', 73 and nn 6, 7.

[609] See Macrides, 'The thirteenth century in Byzantine historical writing', 65.

describes battles and campaigns with particular detail.[610] On these campaigns Akropolites had chancery duties[611] but in 1256 he became more directly involved in military affairs when he was made *praitor*, responsible for the surveillance of the armies in western Macedonia (§66–8).

Akropolites uses several words interchangeably to refer to the army: *στράτευμα*, *στρατός*, *στρατιά* and, from Theodore II's reign, also *στρατόπεδον*.[612] The composition of the armies which the emperors of Nicaea took on campaign to the European territories is not specified by Akropolites, except in a general way. At different times he mentions the existence of an army from the theme of Neokastra (§60), the emperor's 'company' (*taxis*) (§60), troops from Paphlagonia (§66, §71), the army in Paphlagonia (§77), archers from Philadelphia (§53), the Vardariots and their *primmikerios* (§63).

He is likewise not specific about the size of the army. A 'battle-worthy army' is his standard phrase for a good-sized army (§30, §43, §48, §49, §60). We can only wonder how many men Theodore II assembled in 1256 to produce an army 'greater than those his father the emperor and he himself had ever collected to cross the Hellespont' (§61).[613] The largest units of men Akropolites mentions are 300, 400, or 500 (§66, §71); he calls a unit of 400 men 'a modest size' (§69). The only overall figure for an army in the *History* is for Theodore I at the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander in 1211: 2000 men, 800 of whom were Latins (§9, §10, §15). The Latins continued to play a large role in the armies of the Nicaean emperors. In 1253 and in 1258 they were asked to give their opinion on Michael Palaiologos (§50, §76). Cumans also contributed to the military effort (§40, §59, §66, §81), as did Turks (§81). These ethnic groups, Latins, Cumans, and Turks, are treated as separate and distinct contingents in the army, each with its own commander (§59.20).

Akropolites relates that both John III and Theodore II campaigned out of season (§43, §46, §55–9) but he passes a different judgement on each emperor for his use of the same tactic. In John's case the strategy was a key to his military success (§52.22), while when Theodore campaigned in winter 'he was thinking about one thing only, fulfilling his own wish' (§59).[614] Both emperors are shown by Akropolites to have improvised in difficult situations. John III used the servants of the soldiers, the '*tzouloukones*', to gain control of the lower city of Serres in 1246, since he had set off with an army which was

[610] See the commentary at §43.
[611] Above, 11, and §44, §49, §63.10.
[612] §56, §57, §58, §63, §66, §68. Angold, *Exile*, 190 n. 58, comments that Akropolites uses the word consistently to mean a unit of the field army. He uses it also, however, to mean a camp: §63 (Heis., p. 128.2, 9).
[613] Skout. comments on its impressive size: see §66.1.
[614] See above, 59, for *Kaiserkritik*.

not 'battle-worthy' (§43), that is, it had been assembled to inspect lands and not to attack. Theodore II recruited men along the route of his march because 'winter prevented the mustering of the forces' (§55).

Certain cities and regions are shown by the frequency of reference to them to have been significant in the military structure of the empire. Thessalonike was the centre for the *praitor* of the western territories. It is there that Andronikos Palaiologos, Theodore Philes and George Akropolites had their base (§46.2.7, §67). Likewise Adrianople (§56) and Philippi (§43, §50) were used as base camps. Akropolites indicates the importance of the region of Paphlagonia when he reports that, upon becoming emperor, Michael VIII sent his brother Constantine to 'inspect the cities there and the army and the fortresses' (§77).

Despite the predominance of warfare in the *History*, no conclusions can be reached about the military organization of the 'empire of Nicaea' from Akropolites' account. However, as his narrative is central to the thirteenth century, it has been used in discussions of the nature of the Nicaean army.[615] These show misunderstandings of his work. Generalizations have been made on the basis of specific cases, first mentions by Akropolites are taken as first occurrences of a phenomenon, his words are taken literally. Thus, when Akropolites reports John III's use of *tzouloukones* at Serres or Theodore II's recruitment of 'people he met along the way' (§55) or of those 'who served the emperors in the game preserves and in the hunting of game' (§61), these acts do not indicate a lack of trained troops in the empire of Nicaea,[616] but rather, the emperors' improvisation on occasions when winter or some other reason prevented them from summoning all their men. In the last example it was Theodore's desire to collect the largest group of men possible that made him take 'even those who had never been enrolled in the ranks of the army'. When Akropolites mentions that Theodore left an army of Paphlagonians in the western territories (§66), this cannot be assumed to be the first case of provincial troops being drafted into the field army.[617] Rather, it is the first time Akropolites has mentioned such an act, for he gives much more circumstantial detail for Theodore II's campaigns than he does for John III's. When Akropolites describes Margarites as a 'peasant born of peasants' (§60) this is not evidence that the system of peasant soldiers was still in existence at Nicaea.[618] Akropolites is denouncing a favoured man of Theodore II who gave preference to Anatolians over the Constantinopolitan aristocracy.[619]

[615] See Angold, *Exile*, 182–201; Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 21–42.
[616] Angold, *Exile*, 185, 191; Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 32, 35.
[617] Angold, *Exile*, 190; Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 31.
[618] Angold, *Exile*, 194.
[619] See at §60.3 and above, 40–1.

The navy

The naval capacity and activity of the 'empire of Nicaea'[620] is a subject Akropolites touches on sporadically and then only from the time of John III Vatatzes. His first mention of ships and shipbuilding comes early in the reign of John III (§23), giving the impression that a fleet was first built under that emperor. However, a number of sources, Greek and Latin, make it known that Theodore I had a considerable fleet.[621]

Akropolites shows that John III had two main shipyards and naval bases, one for the Aegean at Smyrna (§48), the other for the Hellespont at Holkos (§22–§23). Likewise, Stadeia (§28) on the Aegean and Lampsakos on the sea of Marmara are mentioned as naval bases. Because Lampsakos and neighbouring Pegai were the major ports for crossing the Propontis to the European territories (§40, §41, §83, §84), they were also the sites of events which took place before crossing or upon returning: betrothals of the emperor's children (§33, §49), promotions of the emperor's men (§60), feast day celebrations (§60), election of a patriarch (§84).

Akropolites calls the ships of the emperor 'triremes', although on occasion he gives more specific and up-to-date names to the ships of westerners.[622] The size of the fleet can only be conjectured. Akropolites gives numbers of ships only twice. In 1237 the emperor John gave Manuel Komnenos Doukas six triremes and sent him to Thessaly (§38). In 1241 a naval battle with the Latins cost the 'Nicaeans' 13 of the 30 ships they engaged (§37).

From the 1220s John III used his naval base at Holkos to attack the coastal cities of the Chersonese (§22) and, as Skoutariotes says in addition, to trap western ships as they passed into the Hellespont on the way to Constantinople (§22.10). From 1235 onwards, the emperor John made several attempts on Constantinople (§30, §37, §40, §48).[623] Akropolites does not mention all of these (§37, §40). However, some of his references to emperors in the region of Lampsakos–Pegai (§40, §41, §49) may be indirect indications of impending or actual naval action against the capital.[624]

Akropolites says little about the islands of the 'empire of Nicaea', mentioning only Rhodes, the expedition to put down the 'rebellion' of Leo Gabalas in

[620] Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*, 301–27; Angold, *Exile*, 196–200.

[621] Chon. 638.64–5; Vill. §468–70, 476, 479 (*anno* 1207); letter (*anno* 1212) of the emperor Henry, ed. Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 412.39–43, 424–5; treaty (*anno* 1219) of Theodore I with the Venetians: TTh II, 207.

[622] See §48.9.

[623] See also at §78.8 where Michael Palaiologos refers to his battles with the Latins when he held a military command in Bithynia and the Optimates theme.

[624] See Langdon, *Imperial offensive*, 82 n. 194.

1233 (§28), and another to expel the invading Genoese in 1248–50 (§48). Akropolites' use of the word 'rebellion' to describe Gabalas' action implies that an emperor at Nicaea had previously come to an agreement with Leo but that the latter continued to rule independently, thus provoking the Nicaean expedition (§28.3).[625] The emperor in question could have been Theodore I who is credited by Choniates with conquest of 'most of the islands'.[626] Gregoras, on the other hand, lists Rhodes among the islands John III conquered.[627]

Akropolites names the men who were put in command of the ships sent against Thessalonike in 1241 (§40), against the Latins at Dakibyza and Niketiatou on the Asia Minor coast in 1240–1 (§37), and Gabalas and the Genoese on Rhodes in 1233 and 1248 (§28, §48). They were Manuel Kontophre (Godfrey), Iophre (Geoffrey) 'the Armenian', Andronikos Palaiologos, John Kantakouzenos, and Theodore Kontostephanos. In the twelfth century naval commanders held the title of *megas doux*.[628] The title is not, however, attested in Akropolites' *History*. Yet there were such title-holders at Nicaea, both in the reign of Theodore I and later.[629] Pachymeres shows that Michael Palaiologos was made *megas doux* in 1258 in the first stage of his ascent to the imperial throne, and Michael bestowed the title on Michael Laskaris in 1259.[630] In the *History* naval commanders are referred to with a variety of titles: Andronikos Palaiologos was *megas domestikos* when he was sent to Rhodes (§28), while John Kantakouzenos and Kontostephanos are mentioned by their honorific titles, respectively *pinkernes* and *protosebastos*. Akropolites adds for Kantakouzenos that he was *doux* of the Thrakesion theme when he was sent to Rhodes (§48), and this is confirmed by documents from the Lembos cartulary which also show that Kontophre combined his honorific title with the function of *doux* of the Thrakesion theme.[631]

[625] See §28.3 and above, 40, 50, for this interpretation.

[626] Chon. 638.64–5. [627] Greg. I, 28.23–29.4.

[628] Guilland, 'Le drongaire de la flotte, le grand drongaire de la flotte, le duc de la flotte, le mégaduc', in Guilland, *Recherches* I, 547.

[629] Angold, *Exile*, 197, 200.

[630] Pach. I, 97.15, 101.21, 153.20–1; II, 401.17–20.

[631] See at §37.17, §48.5.

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Translation and Commentary

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The *History* of George Akropolites

1. The usefulness of history has already been defined by our predecessors and we must repeat much of what they had to say. For how could we find a newer insight than those many historians who have revealed the general value of history in their own works? But perhaps we should present in the preface to our composition that which is worth saying on the task that lies before us that is supplementary to them; that is, we have new subject matter which no one has yet committed to writing; novelty also has some usefulness when people gain knowledge of the things which the indiscriminate flow of vulgar speech[1] does not reveal truthfully.

Now those who have written histories about our affairs have taken various starting points. Some began with the creation of the world, others from some notable empire,[2] either that of the Persians or the Greeks, the Romans or some other people,[3] each one adjusting his own work in relation to his aim. In our case too our composition will be brought to completion in the same way. However, events from the beginning of the creation of the world have been narrated by many people at many times; one need not mention the fact that most writers of history have contradicted each other in writing about emperors' reigns, territorial change and civic uprisings, the outbreak of wars, enslavements, victories and defeats and all the kinds of things that happen in our times.[4] Since these things are complex and perhaps not even understood by the very men who effect them, the attainment of truth is hardly to be realized in full by those who narrate them. Even more, whatever is known by common report, this the historian ought to omit,[5] if he does not wish to do injustice to truth, like those who falsify coins with small change[6] or even set out to make counterfeits.

At all events, the author ought to write neither with favour nor with malice, nor out of hatred or goodwill[7] but for the sake of history alone and so that what has been done by some, whether it be good or bad, is not relegated to the depths of oblivion which time is wont to produce.[8] So let our beginning be the capture of the city of Constantine which is so notorious and well known to everyone that there is not a single nation that did not learn about it.

§1 *Many of the themes in this* prooimion *are to be found also in Polybios, I, §1, §2, §5, §14–15. Akrop.'s* prooimion *is borrowed word for word by Makarios Melissenos in the sixteenth century:* Georgius Phrantzes, *ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838), 3–5. See also the Introduction, 30.*

[1] Akrop. uses the same phrase at §35.2 and §59.12 in reference to the common or spoken language.

[2] On varieties of historical writing in the twelfth-century 'world chronicles', see Macrides, 'History-writing in the twelfth century', in Macrides and Magdalino, 'The fourth kingdom and the rhetoric of Hellenism', 120–39. Akrop. shows here that he makes no distinction between the 'world chronicle' and the history he writes. See the Introduction, 30.

[3] Akrop. uses *ethnos/ethne* to refer to pagan and Christian people: the Bulgarians, Tatars, Latins, Cumans, Turcomans, Albanians, and Romans (§34, §40, §42, §59, §61, §65, §68).

[4] Skyl. (3–4, esp. 4.36–9) also points out in his *prooimion* that the accounts of previous writers of history are contradictory.

[5] I suggest in place of *παραλήψασθαι* (Heis. 4.16), to adopt *παραλείψασθαι*, 'to omit'. Akrop.'s disdain for the 'common' language, expressed above at §1.1 and elsewhere in the text, makes it unlikely that he would advocate its adoption in the writing of history. Akrop. contrasts the writing of history, beginning with the creation of the world, for which the historian needs to rely on the writings of other authors, with writing about more recent events, when the historian would be able to use 'common report'.

[6] Akrop. uses 'obols' to mean coins in general. He appears to be referring to the falsification of coins by changing their value. Coins or metals of low denomination or value are made to have a higher value, either through plating or mixing metals. On these processes see Hendy, *Studies*, 316–24. I understand the passage to mean, 'those who falsify coins by presenting small change as coins of higher value'.

[7] Polybios, I, §14: this theme is cited often by those who point to Akrop.'s impartiality. However, it is found also in the *prooimia* of Anna Komnene (1.2.25–30) and Pach. (I, 25.1–4), where it occasions less interest for modern historians. See the Introduction, 30.

[8] Hdt. 1.1; also Anna Komnene (1.1.1–10) and Pach. (I, 23.13–16).

2. At the time when Alexios Komnenos who was a brother of the previous emperor Isaac (both were named Angelos)[1] wielded the Roman sceptre, the men from Italy[2] set out on an expedition against Constantinople. The reason was as follows. The forementioned Alexios deposed his brother Isaac from rule and impaired his sight[3] and was, from then on, ruler of the empire of the Romans.

Isaac had a son, born to him of his first wife, who was already entering manhood.[4] Greatly troubled by the ill-treatment of his father, he devised his escape,[5] came to Rome and fell at the feet of its bishop;[6] entreating him persistently, he sought revenge for his father. At that time it happened that great masses of Italians[7] were assembling, some from Italy itself, some from the realm of the Franks, others from the Venetians, and others from elsewhere, and the reason given[8] was to go to free Jerusalem where the Lord's tomb is. The man who gathered them together was the one presiding as bishop over the Elder Rome and it was he whom, as I said before, Isaac's son entreated for the sake of his father's rule. The pope, who was swayed by the youth's appeals, but especially by his promises[9] for these were substantial, entrusted the youth to the leaders of the armies so that, deviating from their objective, they might establish him on his father's throne and receive from him whatever expenses they might incur on the journey and while delayed at the city of Constantine.

So they were conveyed in triremes and hollow ships, making the outward journey successfully with favourable winds.[10] When they had come ashore at the city of Constantine, they brought to the attention of the people there the youth, the injustice, and the orders, on this account, from the bishop of Rome.[11] For a time discussions took place on both sides and violent battles on land, while embassies did not result in agreements.[12] The emperor Alexios recoiled from affairs of this sort and, indeed, gave up on the people within the city, who were intent on turmoil and infected with instability; so abandoning everything, he took to flight 'willingly but with a reluctant heart',[13] adding this, according to those who heard him, 'David was saved by fleeing';[14] he took with him both his wife and ample funds from the imperial treasury.[15]

§2 *The background to the Fourth Crusade is related, from Alexios IV's arrival in the west (1201), to Alexios III's flight from Constantinople (July 1203). See the Introduction, 78–9.*

[1] Isaac II (1185–95) and Alexios III (1195–1203) were grandsons of Constantine Angelos and Theodora Komnene, a daughter of Alexios I. They thus had a right to both surnames. However, upon coming to the throne, Alexios adopted the name Komnenos not only because of its greater prestige but also, and more importantly, to dissociate himself from his brother who had created a persona from his Angelos surname: Chon. 459.54–6. On Isaac's use of the 'angel-name', see Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 276–9. Akrop. refers to Alexios III as Komnenos here but later, at §5, as Angelos. See the Introduction, 41–2, for Akrop.'s use of names.

[2] It is not clear whether 'Italy' in this passage refers to the land (see at §2.7 where Italy has this meaning and Vill. §76, for the crusaders' departure from

Venice) or to the 'west'. Although Akrop. uses the word 'Italians' to mean westerners (see at §3, §8.6), 'Italy' does not, elsewhere in the *History*, refer to the 'west' in general. However, the syntax in this passage suggests that Akrop. intends the latter.

[3] Alexios' coup against his brother took place in Thrace, in April 1195, while Isaac was awaiting troops for his expedition against the Vlachs. Isaac was blinded at the monastery at Vera, between Makre and Kypsella: Chon. 450–2.

[4] Akrop. refers to Alexios, whom he does not name until §3, as 'the youth' (*παῖς*) and the western sources call him the 'young prince' (Vill. §91) and 'valet' (Robert of Clari, §17). Akrop. describes him as 'entering manhood' (*τὸν μείρακα ἤδη ἀμείβων*: Heis. 5.8), using *meirax*, like other writers, to refer to someone in his late teens to early twenties (see §39.10; Bryennios, ed. Gautier, 21 (*meirakion*), 51 (*pais*)). Chon. (539.15–16) comments that Alexios was 'young, not so much in age as in brains'. Alexios was born to Isaac and his 'first wife' before his accession to the throne. (For his first wife, identified as an Eirene in western sources, see Hiestand, 'Die erste Ehe Isaaks II Angelos und seine Kinder', 199–208.) Although Isaac had a son, Manuel, born to him by Margaret-Maria of Hungary when he became emperor, he was preparing Alexios for the throne, according to Chon. 419.91–3; 419.6–7.

[5] The date of Alexios' flight to the west has been a central issue for those engaged in the 'diversion question' of the Fourth Crusade. Alexios had been freed from prison by his uncle Alexios III and was accompanying him on an expedition against the rebel, Manuel Kammytzes, when he escaped from the camp and boarded a Pisan vessel at Athyra, on the sea of Marmara (Chon. 536–8). That Alexios was already in the west in the early autumn of 1201 can be deduced from Chon.'s oration to the emperor Alexios III upon his return from the campaign (*Orationes*, 106–12; Brand, *Byzantium confronts the west*, Appendix II, pp 275–6), and from Robert of Clari (§17) who has Boniface of Montferrat claim in 1202 that he met Alexios in Germany 'last year at Christmas'.

[6] Pope Innocent III whom Akrop. names variously as *ἀρχιερεύς*, *πάπας*, *ἀρχιερατικῶς προϊστάμενος*, wrote to Alexios III on 16 November 1202 (ed. Hageneder V, 239–43), saying that Isaac's son had been to see him but had left to go to Philip of Swabia, his sister's husband. In his simplified and abbreviated account Akrop. does not mention Alexios' visit to his sister Eirene and her husband Philip of Swabia, but see Chon. 537.44–8, the Novgorod Chronicle, 44, and Folda, 'The Fourth Crusade, 1201–1203: some reconsiderations', 284–6.

[7] On Akrop.'s use of 'Italians' to describe all westerners, see the Introduction, 89, and at §3, §8.6. Plans for another crusade had been underway since 1198 and by the summer of 1202 crusaders were gathering in Venice in readiness to sail. For the recruitment of crusaders, mainly from northern France, see Vill. §1–10.

[8] Akrop., like twelfth-century Byzantine writers, uses *ἡ πρόφασις* to refer to the westerners' motivation in coming east. See Anna Komnene, 10.6.7; Kinn. 67.6, Chon. 61.56. I have translated the word as 'reason given' rather than 'pretext', as the latter, more common translation of the word is prejudicial. See the discussion in Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 144–5. See also below at §17.3 where I have rendered *σκῆψις* as 'pretext'.

[9] The 'promises' included the 'expenses' Akrop. mentions, that is 200 000 marks and provisions, but also the subjection of the empire to the obedience of Rome, and aid for the crusaders in the Holy Land: 10 000 men kept at Alexios' expense for a year and 500 knights and their expenses during his lifetime. See Vill. §93; Robert of Clari, §32; letter of Hugh of St. Pol: TTh I, 305; Chon. 539.18–540.23.

[10] The fleet left Venice in October 1202, sailing first to Zara and, after the winter, moving on to Corfu, where Alexios joined them. It was the journey from that island to Constantinople in May 1203 which enjoyed 'favourable winds', as both Nikephoros Chrysoberges (ed. Treu, 27.17–19; Brand, 'A Byzantine plan for the Fourth Crusade', 467), and Chon. (541.56–8) record. This detail is, further, mentioned in Vill. (§119) and in the letter of the crusading nobles (c. 25 August 1203) to pope Innocent III: ed. Hageneder 6, no. 210 (211), 359.16–18. On this see the Introduction, 36. Akrop. uses classicizing language to name the ships in the fleet. His 'triremes' are the equivalent of dromons or galleys (see Leo the Deacon, 7.17–18: 'The Romans call these [triremes] dromons'; also, Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 70 n. 87), while his Homeric 'hollow ships' (*Il.* 1.26) should be identified with 'round ships' or freighters which Chon. (539.95) also mentions. Chon. (539.94–5), Robert of Clari (§10) and Vill. (§119) list three types of vessels: horse transports, galleys and freighters. See also §48.9.

[11] Vill. (§145–6) and Robert of Clari (§41) mention this incident. Soon after arriving at Constantinople in June 1203, the crusaders displayed Alexios in a galley, along the city walls, urging the inhabitants of the city to receive him as their 'natural lord'. Letters of the crusade leaders to the pope (ed. Hageneder VI, 359.13–16) and the Novgorod Chronicle (44) show that Alexios had led the crusaders to believe that he had supporters in the city: 'the whole town of Kostyantin desires my rule'.

[12] It is evident here that Akrop. is summarizing his (unknown) source. These 'discussions' are known only from Vill. (§141–4) and Robert of Clari (§41) and took place before Alexios was shown to the people of the city. Immediately thereafter the westerners prepared for battle. 'Violent battles' took place in the first half of July in the area of the Blachernai palace: Vill. §§147–81; Robert of Clari, §42–50; Chon. 542–6.

[13] *Il.* 4.43. Akrop. shows Alexios to have taken to flight with mixed feelings, not from fear but as a reaction to the behaviour of the people in the city. This view can be found also in the earlier version of Chon.'s *History.* See the Introduction, 80 and n. 495 and Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 148–9.

[14] 1 Kgs 19.18 (1 Sam. 19.18). For the comparison of Alexios with king David, also in the anonymous fourteenth-century paraphrase of Chon.'s *History* and on the significance of this biblical passage for Alexios III's intentions, see the Introduction, 80 and n. 494.

[15] Alexios III fled to Develtos on the Black Sea on the night of 17 July 1203, taking gold and jewels with him but not his 'wife', as Akrop. asserts. Euphrosyne (see §10) was arrested after Alexios' flight and left the city after the conquest: Chon. 546.72–547.84, 550.30–1; Vill. §182, §266; Robert of Clari, §52.

3. When he left the city of Constantine, the inhabitants went in embassy to the Italians so that Isaac's son, Alexios, about whom the fighting seemed to be, might be brought inside and proclaimed emperor. So the youth was brought into the city on the terms of the earlier treaties to which he had committed himself with the Italians who were promoting him, and he was proclaimed emperor by all the people.[1] From then on the citizens and the Italians were seemingly at peace, with the Italians demanding the fulfilment of the promises and the expenses, while the inhabitants of the city considered the sum to be an excessive amount, and insisted that they did not have so much money to give to the Italians.[2] At that time too there was grumbling in the city on this account. For Alexios' father, Isaac Angelos (he was still alive, although he died shortly thereafter, before the city of Constantine was conquered)[3] advised that there should be a collection of the holy treasures and this should be the first payment towards the debt owed to the Italians; the remainder was to be given from the imperial treasuries and the inhabitants of the city.[4] In the meantime, while there was dispute and ambassadors were arriving from both sides,[5] Isaac's son Alexios was murdered by Alexios Doukas to whom he had given the dignity of *protovestiarios*; the people of the city, picking on one of his characteristics, called him Mourtzouphlos. So the said Alexios Mourtzouphlos was proclaimed emperor by the citizens.[6] Enraged all the more on this account, the Italians conceived implacable hatred for the Constantinopolitans.[7]

It happened also that the citizens came to another decision which is not worthy of praise. For the prominent men and those in office resolved to send away from the city the Latins who were inhabitants of the city of Constantine, so as not to have them plotting within. They went over to the enemy of their own accord, in their thousands, despite having first assured the citizens with

irrevocable oaths that they would never meditate treachery against them but, if the situation should arise, would die alongside them, as natives and indigenous people. And yet, because they gave over their wives as well as their children to be taken to more secure places, they did not carry conviction. When they left they helped the enemy greatly as they were many in number[8] and knowledgeable in matters.[9]

§3 *Akrop. describes events from the enthronement of Alexios IV in the summer of 1203, to the usurpation of Alexios V Mourtzouphlos in the winter of 1204. See the letter (after 16 May 1204) of Baldwin of Flanders to pope Innocent concerning this period of time: ed. Hageneder VII, no. 152, 253–62.*

[1] As Akrop. comments, the westerners were interested in the enthronement of Isaac's son, Alexios, 'about whom the fighting seemed to be'. However, contemporary sources indicate that the inhabitants of the city were concerned to reinstate Isaac after Alexios III's flight. It was he who had to confirm 'the terms of the earlier treaties' before the crusaders would allow Alexios to enter Constantinople. Alexios IV was not crowned until 1 August 1203: Vill. §182, §184–90, §193 and Appendix A; Robert of Clari, §56; Chon. 550–1. In his letter to pope Innocent III, dated 25 August 1203, Alexios IV refers to his coronation as having taken place: ed. Hageneder VI, no. 209 (210), 355–8.

[2] The period of time alluded to ('from then on') is summer–autumn 1203. See Chon. 552–60; Vill. §194–216; Robert of Clari, §52–60. Alexios IV began payments immediately after his coronation and paid at once half the 'expenses', 100 000 of the 200 000 silver marks he had promised, but payments were slow after that: Vill. §193; Robert of Clari, §56–60. Akrop.'s statement that 'the inhabitants . . . insisted that they did not have so much' is substantiated by Vill. (§194) and Robert of Clari (§57) who show that Alexios IV did not have support in the city.

[3] Isaac fell ill and died in January 1204, at the time of Alexios V's usurpation: Chon. 562.63–6; Vill. §223. An oration by Nikephoros Chrysoberges, intended to be delivered on 6 January 1204, is addressed to Alexios IV only. See Brand, 'A Byzantine plan for the Fourth Crusade', 462–75. According to the Novgorod Chronicle (45), Alexios IV had kept Isaac in the background from the time of his return from his Thracian expedition in November 1203.

[4] Isaac resorted to a practice which had most recently been used under Alexios III when he plundered the imperial tombs to provide a payment of 5000 pounds of gold for Henry VI of Germany: Chon. 478–9. Chon. refers (551, 555–6, 559–60) to three collections of 'holy treasures' in 1203: in July, when Isaac was first reinstated, icons of Christ were stripped of their precious metal decoration, and holy vessels were collected; in August, 'an even more

exhaustive' collection of sacred treasure was made, gold and silver which was melted down; in late autumn the gold furnishings and silver lamps of the Great Church were taken. The 'remainder', which was to be given by the inhabitants, corresponds to the collection of taxes which Chon. says (560.82–3) made the people 'seethe with insurrection'. An oration composed to be delivered on 6 January 1204 by Nikephoros Chrysoberges indicates the resentment felt towards the Latins. For this oration, see Brand, 'A Byzantine plan for the Fourth Crusade', 462–75.

[5] Alexios IV sent envoys to the crusaders to inform them that he would make no more payments. They responded by sending an embassy to protest. Vill., one of the delegates sent to Alexios, reports (§208–16) that the envoys were fortunate to get away with their lives. See also Robert of Clari, §56–61.

[6] Akrop. and Chon. call Alexios V 'Doukas' but the western sources call him 'Mourtzouphlos', a nickname given to him because of his bushy eyebrows, according to Chon. 561.23–5. Akrop. shows that he knows 'Mourtzouphlos' is a nickname, both here ('picking on one of his characteristics') and below, in reference to Isaac Doukas ('those who are in the habit of playing with names had given this one to his family': §69). The name was originally given to Alexios V Doukas to distinguish him from others with the relatively common first name and family name. See Cheynet, 'L'anthroponymie aristocratique à Byzance', 293; Polemis, *Doukai*, 145–7. Alexios Doukas was a 'blood relation' of Alexios IV (letter of Baldwin to Innocent III, ed. Hageneder, VII, 255.1–2). He had taken part in the revolt of John Komnenos the Fat (1201). See Brand, *Byzantium confronts the west*, 347–8 n. 14. Upon coming to the throne Alexios IV released him from prison: Robert of Clari (§58); Novgorod Chronicle (45). Chon. (563.79) confirms that he held the title of *protovestiarios* and, as such, was close to Alexios IV. Cf. Robert of Clari, §52: 'sen maistre bailliu'. He used his influence to alienate Alexios from the crusaders, urging him to stop payments to them: Robert of Clari, §58. He imprisoned Alexios IV in late January 1204, was proclaimed emperor (Alexios V) on 5 February 1204, and had Alexios IV strangled on 8 February: Novgorod Chronicle, 46; Chon. 563–4; Vill. §221–3; cf. Robert of Clari, §62. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, no. 203, pp 142–3. For Mourtzouphlos see also §5.

[7] The murder of Alexios IV was the occasion for the crusaders' attack on the city. They had no obligations to the 'traitor' Alexios V. See Vill. §§224–5; Robert of Clari, §62; the Novgorod Chronicle, 46; Madden, 'Vows and contracts in the fourth crusade', 441–68, esp. 460–4.

[8] I have adopted the emendation proposed by Bases (see Wirth, 'Addenda', xxvii): *πολλοί* for *πολύ*.

[9] The departure, 'in their thousands' (Vill. §205: c. 15 000), of Latins who were permanent residents of Constantinople, was a turning point in Greek–Latin relations and as such is reported in most accounts of the crusade.

Akrop. misplaces it in time, dating it to 40 days before the conquest (see §4), and represents the exodus as the consequence of a decision taken by 'the prominent men and those in office'. His account finds some agreement in Gunther of Pairis' statement that the westerners were 'expelled at the time of the siege because they were suspected of treason by the citizens' (§18). However, Vill. (§203–5) and Chon. (552–5) give as the cause of the exodus a conflict between Greeks and Latins and describe the damage done by the fire set at the time, in August 1203. On this see Madden, 'The fires of the fourth crusade in Constantinople, 1203–1204', 72–89, esp. 74–84. Like Akrop., Vill. (§205) states that the departing Latins were a great help to the crusaders.

4. Forty days passed and the city of Constantine was conquered by these men in the 6711th year [1203] since the creation of the world, on the 12th of April. They anchored by the city in May of the 10th year [1202] but the conquest took place 11 months later.[1] The greatest and most renowned city was captured when one, as they say, or two men leapt onto the wall from a ladder which rested on the mast of a large hollow ship.[2] To relate all that happened to the city would be a matter for long discussion and not in accord with the present subject. But everyone can imagine all the misfortunes that have befallen captured cities—killing of men and enslavement of women, plundering, destruction of homes and all the other things that are wrought by the sword.[3] When the Italians became masters of the city, surging forth as from a high ground, they overran the whole west and not a small part of the east[4] as well. But first they conquered the western territories,[5] while all fled from them[6] as if struck by 'a blow sent by God'.[7]

§4 *For Akrop.'s version of the conquest of Constantinople, see the Introduction, 78–9.*

[1] Akrop.'s date for the conquest of the city is off by one year, although the month and day are correct. Constantinople fell in the 6712th year (1204) since the creation of the world: Chon. 568.88–9; 617.88–90. The year 1203 is given as the date of the conquest also in a 'short chronicle' made up of three, thirteenth-century entries in a tenth-century Psalter. See Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken*, I, no. 19, p. 173. Akrop. is consistent in his error as he later (at §85.15) states that 58 years passed between the conquest by the Latins and the reconquest by the Greeks. See the Introduction, 42–3, on Akrop.'s dates and dating.

[2] A ladder on the *Pilgrim*, one of the 'large hollow ships' Akrop. mentions, joined a tower of the wall. A Venetian and a knight from France, André Durboise, entered the tower. See Vill. §242; Robert of Clari, §74; Chon. 569–70.

[3] For two first-hand accounts, see Chon. 572–82, and Nicholas Mesarites, *Epitaphios*, ed. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', I, 46–8.

[4] The expressions *δυσμὴ . . . ἑώας μέρος* (Heis. 8.13–14), and their synonyms, *δύσις . . . ἀνατολή, τὰ ἑσπέρια ὅρια . . . τὰ Ἀσιανά* are used by Akrop. (see also §8.1, §11, §43.2, §60, etc.) and other authors writing after 1204 to refer respectively to (Byzantine) territory in the Balkans and in Asia Minor. See Chon. 612.36; Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 373.75, 79, 83; Blem.'s letter to the patriarch Manuel: *Epistulae*, 329.113; Pach. I, 35.18–20; Soustal and Koder, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia*, 39–40. The usage is older and relates to the administrative organization of the army into divisions of 'east' and 'west'. See Guilland, *Recherches* I, 392, 393. For a twelfth-century example see Kinn. 215.13–14.

[5] The order which Akrop. ascribes to the conquests of the Latins, first in the west, then in the east, is confirmed by Vill. All the land from Constantinople to Thessalonike was under Latin domination by the end of September 1204: Vill. §272–302. In November the Latins turned to the 'other side of the Arm, towards Turkey' (§304). Akrop. gives an account of the Latin conquests in greater detail below, §7, §13.

[6] According to Chon. (602.1–3) and Vill. (§269), the Greeks did not at first resist the Latins but greeted them with signs of the cross and words from the Scriptures. Soon, however, Vill. reports (§303), they began to hate the Latins because of their bad behaviour towards them.

[7] Hdt. 7.18.

5. Now the emperor Alexios Angelos[1] who fled from the city of Constantine, as the narrative related, arrived at Philippopolis[2] and, as he was not admitted by the inhabitants, he went to Mosynopolis[3] and took up residence there. Since Alexios Doukas, who killed Isaac's son, wished to attach himself to Alexios Angelos through marriage, at one and the same time he killed the son of Isaac and took to wife Eudokia,[4] the daughter of the emperor Alexios. She was the youngest of his daughters. He had three: the eldest was named Eirene; he joined her to Alexios Palaiologos and honoured him as despot but Alexios Palaiologos died before the conquest of the city of Constantine.[5] The second was called Anna; he gave her in marriage to Theodore Laskaris.[6] The third was Eudokia. Her father had married her some time previously to the kral of Serbia. He, discovering her in the act of passion, as they said, sent her back to her father where she remained.[7] It was she whom the said Alexios Doukas took, leaving his own wife. So, when the city of Constantine was captured by the Italians, he too fled from there, taking with him also his wife Eudokia.[8]

Upon learning that his father-in-law, the emperor Alexios, was living in Mosynopolis, Alexios Doukas went to him confidently. But Alexios Angelos loathed him for many reasons, not least because of his daughter. Playing the part of an in-law, however, he welcomed Alexios and, preparing a bath, enjoined him to bathe together with his daughter. When Alexios was in the bath, the servants of the emperor Alexios burst in on him suddenly and there gouged out his eyes.[9] Those who were present said that the daughter, standing by the door of the bath, showered[10] abuse on her father and that he rebuked her for shamelessness and for licentious love.

Now blind, the said Alexios Doukas wandered in the area around Mosynopolis, passing through those places like a vagabond.[11] The emperor Alexios, departing from there, went to the region of Thessalonike. When the Italians surged forth from the city of Constantine and arrived at Mosynopolis, they found Alexios Mourtzouphlos there and took him to the city of Constantine. In revenge for the aforementioned crime which he had committed against the son of the emperor Isaac, they sentenced him to a precipitous death. Leading him up the highest column, which is called Tauros, they hurled him down.[12] And such was his end; meanwhile, the emperor Alexios arrived in Thessalonike.

§5 *The movements of Alexios V after his flight from Constantinople (April 1204) are recounted, his blinding at the hands of his father-in-law, Alexios III, and his death in Constantinople, in the late autumn 1204. See Macrides, '1204: The Greek sources', 147–8.*

[1] Akrop. calls Alexios III 'Angelos' here, although earlier (§2), he referred to him as Komnenos. See §2.1 and Introduction, 41.

[2] Alexios' attempt to be admitted to Philippopolis is mentioned only by Akrop. Although the city is not listed in the *Partitio*, and would, therefore, appear to have remained loyal to Alexios III, it may have been under another local dynast. For this argument see Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 465; cf. Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 16–17.

[3] For Mosynopolis, see Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 104–9. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, no. 200, 140–1.

[4] Akrop. never refers to Alexios Doukas (Mourtzouphlos), Alexios V, as emperor. See the Introduction, 80–1. Akrop. explains Alexios Doukas' killing of Isaac's son in terms of his desire to be related to Alexios III. Alexios Doukas wished to legitimize his position as usurper by marriage to the daughter of the former emperor, Alexios III. According to Chon. (571.50–3), Alexios V was not married to Eudokia when he left Constantinople with her. He married her after the conquest: Chon. 608.53–6.

[5] As Alexios III had no sons, he was in effect choosing his successor from his sons-in-law. On the competition for the emperor's daughters see Chon. 497–9. Both Eirene and Anna were widows when Alexios III arranged their second marriages in 1199: Chon. 508.79–82. Alexios III intended Alexios Palaiologos as his heir, as he chose him for his eldest daughter and gave him the title of despot: Greg. I, 69.2–7. On the title of despot, introduced by Manuel I for his son-in-law, see Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 79, 184; idem, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese', 320–1. Alexios Palaiologos' seal as despot survives: Laurent, 'La généalogie des premiers Paléologues: A propos d'un sceau inédit du despote Alexis (†1203)', 125–49. From Pach. (I, 107.2–3) it appears that Alexios was active in fighting the Latins. Akrop. indicates the time of Alexios Palaiologos' death, 'before the conquest of the city', while Skout. (450.29–30) adds that he died of natural causes. The daughter born to Eirene and Alexios, Theodora, was married to Andronikos Palaiologos and was the mother of Michael Palaiologos who was thus a Palaiologos on both sides. See Greg. I, 69.9–13; Cheynet and Vannier, *Études prosopographiques*, nos 29 and 33, pp 170–2 and 178–9; also below §50.34.

[6] Anna, 'second in age but first in beauty' among Alexios III's daughters, according to Chon. 497.8–9, was married to Theodore Laskaris, 'a daring youth, dynamic in deeds of war' (Chon. 508.81–2). Akrop. always calls Theodore 'Laskaris' but he is called 'Komnenos Laskaris' on a seal (pre-1204) and in documents (after 1204). See Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 140. That Theodore had a right by blood to the name Komnenos appears to be confirmed by seals and documents before he became a son-in-law of Alexios III (Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 443–4) and also by a seal of his brother Constantine (Komnenos Laskaris): Wassiliou, 'Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte der Laskariden', 416; Koltsida-Makri, *Βυζαντινά μολυβδόβουλλα*, no. 14, p. 30. Theodore held the title of *protovestiarites* (see Laurent, *Les bulles métriques*, no. 403, p. 415; Wassiliou, 'Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte der Laskariden', 417) before he was made despot in 1203. See §5.5 and the Introduction, 82. See also §7. On the etymology of the name Laskaris, see D. Theodoridis, 'Die Herkunft des byzantinischen Familiennamens *ΛΑΣΚΑΡΙΣ*', *REB* 62 (2004), 269–73.

[7] Eudokia was married to Stephen II, son of Stephen Nemanja, Great Župan of Serbia, in c. 1190. A chrysobull of Alexios III (1198) for Chilandari refers to Stephen Nemanja as his '*sympentheros*', 'in-law': *Actes de Chilandar* I, no. 4, 107 n. 2. On the date of the marriage see J. Kalić, *Vizantijski izvori za istoriju naroda Jugoslavije* 4 (Belgrade, 1971) 164, n. 194. Chon. (531.72–9) states that it was Eudokia's uncle, the emperor Isaac II, and not her father, who arranged the marriage. He confirms that the reason Stephen 'sent her back to her father' in 1200/1 was 'adultery': 'itching from scabby incontinence' (Chon.

531.80–93). Stephen was not yet kral at the time of this separation. He received the title in 1217 when he was crowned by a papal legate. See Obolensky, *Six Byzantine Portraits*, 119, 140–4. A daughter of their marriage was married to Demetrios, independent ruler of Albanon, and, after his death, to the *sebastos* Gregory Kamonas, while their granddaughter was married to Goulamos, another independent ruler in Albanon: see §49.30.

[8] Alexios V left Constantinople on the night of 12 April 1204, taking with him Alexios III's wife, Euphrosyne, and her daughter Eudokia: Chon. 571.47–54; Vill. §266. According to Chon., she was not yet Alexios' wife. See §5.4. Alexios V had been married twice before. His second father-in-law was a Philokales whom Alexios had made *logothetes ton sekreton*, dismissing Chon. from this position: Chon. 571.50–3; 565.11–15.

[9] Chon. 608.51–60 reports the blinding, but Vill. (§§270–1), like Akrop., sets the scene and describes Alexios III's false hospitality.

[10] Akrop. plays on the word ἔπλυνε (Heis. 9.22) in the bath scene. See Macrides, 'George Akropolites' Rhetoric', 204, 206.

[11] Soph. Oed. Col. 1096; Oed. T. 1029.

[12] Alexios V was found in Asia Minor, not Mosynopolis, in November 1204, by Thierry de Loos and was taken back to Constantinople: Vill. §§306–8; Robert of Clari, §108–9. The 'crime' he committed was the killing of Alexios IV for which he was considered a 'traitor' by the Latins: Chon. 608.61–609.72; Vill. §222–3; Robert of Clari, §64; Gunther of Pairis, §20–1. A novel and appropriate death was devised for a man of his status who had committed such a crime—death from a fall of a great height: Akrop.'s 'precipitous death'. The crusader accounts retain the wordplay: 'For a high man . . . high justice': Robert of Clari, §109; Vill. §307. The column from which Alexios V was thrown was in the forum of Theodosius, known as the Tauros: Chon. 609.69–70. Erected by Theodosius I, it was one of two columns in Constantinople with an internal staircase and spiral bas-reliefs depicting victories. See Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 64–8. Akrop. gives the column the name of the forum in which it was standing. This usage can be found also in the case of the Xerolophos, the name of the forum of Arcadius and also of the column which stood there. See *Constantinople in the early eighth century: The Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai*, ed. A. Cameron and J. Herrin (Leiden, 1984), §20, p. 82. For these columns and the crusaders' interpretations of them, see Macrides, 'Constantinople: the crusaders' gaze', 193–212.

6. When the Italians gained possession of the city, they gave licence to those of its inhabitants who wished to remain and be under their control to do so and to those who wanted to depart to go unhindered wherever they might wish. Accordingly, all those who were among the notables left, some openly, others

even secretly.[1] Theodore Laskaris had already left,[2] together with his wife Anna. (My narrative previously disclosed that he was a son-in-law of the emperor Alexios and had been honoured as despot by him.)[3] So, departing with his wife and children—he had three daughters[4] of whom the first was named Eirene, the second, Maria, and the third, Eudokia—and arriving at the city of Nicaea, he appealed to the Nicaeans to admit him into the city and to accept him as their lord. But they would not admit him. Then Laskaris urged them persistently and, even though he entreated them to admit his wife only, he persuaded them with difficulty. Leaving his wife, he then went about the region of Nicaea, Prousa and the surrounding area, to bring these places under his control and to rule over them as emperor in the place of his father-in-law Alexios.[5] In this, at length, he succeeded. In the meantime he also went to the ruler of the Persians, who was his intimate associate,[6] and he gained an alliance[7] and accomplished his aim.

§6 *The foundation of the later 'empire of Nicaea' is recounted here. On this, see the Introduction, 81–6.*

[1] Robert of Clari (§80) gives a similar version of events, stating that the inhabitants of the city were given the choice to stay or leave as they wished. Like Akrop., he indicates that it was the 'notables' who departed (in Robert's words, 'the richest'). Chon. 589–93 describes his departure from the city with his family, familiars, and others, including the patriarch John Kamateros, five days after the conquest, on 17 April. From Chon.'s account of his own travels after April 1204 (634.86–635: critical apparatus), it appears that movement in and out of Constantinople was fairly unrestricted. He went to Selymbria in April 1204 but returned to Constantinople in the spring of 1206 and, after a stay of six months, left for Nicaea. See van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 44–5.

[2] This passage is crucial for the chronology of the foundation of the 'empire of Nicaea'. See the Introduction, 82–3.

[3] A seal of Theodore Laskaris (for him, see §5.6) survives which bears the title of despot: Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals*, I, 3, no. 2753, pp 1570–1. On the title of despot, see §5.5, 6.

[4] See §15.1.

[5] For the interpretation of the phrase 'in the place of his father-in-law', see Vill. §313 and the Introduction, 82.

[6] The 'ruler of the Persians' is Kaykhusraw I ('Iathatines': §8.17) who was an 'intimate associate' (*συνήθης*) of Alexios III through the ties of spiritual kinship created by the baptism/adoption of the sultan by Alexios III. The tie extended to Alexios' children and their spouses: §8.19, 20. For Kaykhusraw see also §8.

[7] The alliance mentioned here with the 'ruler of the Persians' has been identified with the one between Kaykhusraw and Theodore I referred to below (§8). See Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1668b, p. 2. However, the sources give evidence of more than one alliance with more than one sultan. This passage indicates an early agreement, in Theodore's first two years in Asia Minor, 1203–5. 'In the meantime', although vague, refers to Theodore's early attempts to establish himself. In an oration addressed to Theodore as emperor, Chon. seems to refer to this early, first contact with the sultan when he speaks of Theodore's success in receiving military aid from the Turks and how this helped Theodore's reputation among the Romans (*Orationes*, 132.21–8). In the same oration Chon. (132–4) gives a sequence of events which Akrop.'s account also follows (§6–7): Theodore made an alliance with the sultan; he was then proclaimed emperor. The sultans in power in 1203–5 were Rukn al-Din (1197–1204), his son Kilidj Arslan III (1204–5), and Kaykhusraw I, from February/March 1205. Ibn Bibi (38) claims that Theodore Laskaris made an alliance with Kilidj Arslan III. However, there is no evidence to suggest that either Kilidj Arslan or Rukn al-Din were 'intimate associates' of Theodore (*συνήθης*: Heis. 11.3). This description is more appropriate for Kaykhusraw I but he was not reinstated in power as sultan until February/March 1205 (see Wittek, 'Von der byzantinischen zur türkischen Toponymie', 24). Akrop. may have confused an earlier alliance Theodore made with Kilidj Arslan with a later one with Kaykhusraw. On the latter, see §8.16–24, esp. §8.23.

7. After two years had passed[1] and Laskaris was being called despot by all, an assembly took place in Nicaea of notables and the select men of the church.[2] They resolved that the despot Theodore be called emperor. But a patriarch was not present there, for John Kamateros, who graced the patriarchal throne when the Italians conquered the city of Constantine, had gone to Didymoteichon and taken up residence there, and when he was summoned by Laskaris and the rest, he declined to go to them, putting his resignation in writing.[3] So Michael Autoreianos was elected patriarch, a learned man, acquainted with all literature, both ours and the other.[4] He crowned the despot Theodore with the imperial diadem.[5]

Now that Laskaris had been proclaimed[6] emperor, he applied himself to affairs more intensely, and engaged in no small number of fierce battles.[7] For the Italians, having made their passage over to the east, brought most of it under their control.[8] The entire theme of Opsikion and Aigaion,[9] and even Atramytion itself became Italian possessions. Baris and Aulonia,[10] Poimanenon, and Lentiana[11] up to and including Lopadion[12] recognized the Italians as masters, but also all of Thynia up to and including Nikomedeia.[13] The emperor Theodore was therefore greatly confined. But he was no less

hard-pressed by the Romans. For in the confusion of the conquest of the city of Constantine, commanders[14] appeared one from one place, another from another; those who were prominent over the others[15] made the land they had under their control their personal realm, having set out to do this either by their own initiative or because they had been summoned to the defence[16] of the land by its inhabitants. Suddenly, Theodore, whom they called Morotheodoros,[17] was ruler of the city of Philadelphia; another man, Sabbas by name,[18] was master of the town of Sampson, along with the places neighbouring it. David was in control of all Paphlagonia. He was brother of the Alexios who ruled over Trebizond, and he was called Megas Komnenos: they were grandchildren of the emperor Andronikos, born to his son Manuel.[19] Because of this the emperor Theodore found himself in straitened circumstances. However, he skilfully pursued Morotheodoros and Sabbas, and henceforth confidently gained control over Kelbianon,[20] all of the Maeander,[21] Philadelphia, and Neokastra.[22]

§7 *Akrop. relates the sequence of events which constitute the foundation of the 'empire of Nicaea': the proclamation of Theodore I as emperor, the election of the patriarch at Nicaea, the coronation of Theodore, and his victories over the Latins and the independent rulers in Asia Minor. For the chronology of events, see the Introduction, 83–4.*

[1] For the date, 1205, see the Introduction, 83.

[2] Nicaea is named here as the place of assembly and deliberation of distinguished lay- and churchmen in 1205. It was thus, from early on, the centre of Theodore's activities. The patriarch was elected there and Theodore was crowned in Nicaea. Vill. (§455) refers to it as Theodore's capital in the context of describing events of 1206, as does Chon. in an oration of the same date (*Orationes,* 139.6–12). Inscriptions on towers at Nicaea attest to Theodore's building activity there. See Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications*, 79–117, esp. 85, 96, 103, 114, 115. According to Blem. (*Autobiographia* I, §12), a 'residence' was built there for the emperors. On Nicaea, see the Introduction, 87–8.

[3] The patriarch John Kamateros (1198–1206): Grumel, *Regestes* I, pp 604–12. Kamateros remained in Didymoteichon until his death in May 1206: Chon. 593.56–60; 633.57–9. On his resignation, see Xanthopoulos, PG 147, 464D; Grumel, *Regestes* I, no. 1202, pp 611–12.

[4] Michael IV Autoreianos (1208–13: see §19) was *chartophylax* of the Great Church and *megas sakellarios* before he became patriarch: Chon., *Orationes,* 214–15; van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 180–1. He was on Mt Olympos in Bithynia when he was elected to the patriarchate. See the oration for him by the *didaskalos* of the Psalms, Sergios, whom Autoreianos appointed upon

becoming patriarch: Loukaki, 'Première didascalie de Serge le Diacre', 151–73. For the acts of his patriarchate see Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 113–45; Laurent, *Regestes*, pp 2–22. On the date of his election, see the Introduction, 83. Akrop. comments on Autoreianos' education, as on that of other patriarchs at Nicaea: see the Introduction, 47–9. For the expression, 'both ours and the other', a reference to Christian and pagan literature, see Theodoret of Cyrus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 1.23.2: γραφῆς . . . τῆς ἡμετέρας καὶ θύραθεν.

[5] Akrop. gives the impression that Theodore was recognized as despot until his coronation in 1208. However, he had already been proclaimed emperor in 1205. See the Introduction, 82–3.

[6] In the preceding sentence Akrop. mentioned Theodore's coronation. He now appears to be referring to his 'proclamation' (ἀναγορευθεὶς)—'when Laskaris had been proclaimed emperor'—as if going back to the time after his proclamation and before his coronation. However, Akrop. (see also §21, §77, §89), like other thirteenth-century writers, uses the verb ἀναγορεύω, and the noun which derives from it, to refer to the coronation of the emperor. This is confirmed by Skout. (539.26–7) who substitutes στεφηφορία, coronation, for Akrop.'s ἀνηγορεύθη. For other examples of this usage see Failler, 'La proclamation impériale de Michel VIII et d'Andronic II', 241–2 and n. 21. However, here Akrop. is referring to a date in 1205: see the Introduction, 83.

[7] For the date of these battles, 1205, see the Introduction, 83–4.

[8] Skout. adds (452, 18–20=*Additamenta*, no. 2, p. 277) that the Italians were incited to make these conquests by the Latin inhabitants of Pegai and the Armenians at Skamandros.

[9] Akrop. uses the word 'theme' only of the Opsikion and Aigaion, and of Neokastra (see §15.15, §60). The two themes of Opsikion and Aigaion became one by the twelfth century. See Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *de Thematibus*, ed. A. Pertusi, *Studi e Testi*, 160 (1952), 68–9, 82–3; Angold, *Exile*, 245. The theme of Opsikion and Aigaion is mentioned in the 1198 chrysobull for the Venetians (TTh I, 270), but not in the *Partitio*.

[10] Chon. speaks of Baris and Aulonia as one and the same place, in the theme of the Aigaion (91.27–8) and on the Hellespont (537.34–5). However, Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 154, distinguishes between them and situates them in the area west of Kyzikos.

[11] Lentiana (Skout. 452.22: Oualentiniana) is the name of a region and a town in the neighbourhood of Poimanenon, a town south of Kyzikos, on the Tarsios river. See Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 157–8. In this passage the region is meant, since Akrop. says 'Lentiana as far as Lopadion'.

[12] Lopadion (Ulubad), on the banks of the Rhyndakos, is listed as an *episkepsis* of the Opsikion theme in the 1198 chrysobull: TTh I, 270. See Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 78–83; Foss, 'The defenses of Asia Minor', 159–61.

[13] Oikonomides ('La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 19) identifies (Meso)Thynia, mentioned in Alexios III's chrysobull of 1198 for Venice (*prouincia mesothinie*: TTh I, 269), with the Optimates theme, referred to in the *Partitio* (ed. Carile, 217, 233–4). However, Pach. (I, 43.6–7) speaks of 'Mesothynia and Optimates itself', giving rise to Failler's suggestion that Mesothynia is a region in the Optimates theme. See Pach. I, 42 n. 2; also Cheynet, 'L'époque byzantine', 327 n. 133. For Mesothynia see also §64.8. For Nikomedeia (Izmit) in Bithynia, see Foss, 'The defenses of Asia Minor', 199–201; also §24, §37, §48.

[14] See below at §77.7–8 where Akrop. refers to *ἡγεμόνες στρατευμάτων*, 'commanders of the armies'. The men who appeared as independent rulers before and after 1204 were, in many cases, men who had held military commands in the areas over which they took control. See the Introduction, 84 and n. 529.

[15] The *προύχοντες* are mentioned also above at §3 as men who held office. On these men, see also the Introduction, 84–6, and notes.

[16] The word *δεφένδευσις* (Heis. 12.10) is a technical term found in legal texts and military treatises to denote 'defence', 'protection' and 'vindication'. See Theophilos Antecessor, *Institutionum Graeca Paraphrasis* I, ed. K. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal (Berlin, 1884), 240; *Das Strategikon des Maurikios*, ed. Dennis, 112.36, 434.11; Trapp, *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität*, fasc. 2, s.v. *δεφένδευσις*.

[17] Chon. (399.64–6) comments that Theodore acquired the surname (*προσωνυμίαν*) Morotheodoros or 'Foolish Theodore' because of his failure in his bid for independent power. For another example of a name which has 'Moro' as a prefix, see Skyl. (372.74–5): 'George whom they called Morogeorgios because of the instability of his opinion'. However, in Theodore's case it seems that contemporaries were aware of the Turkic meaning of his (sur)name, Mankaphas (old Ottoman for 'stupid', 'foolish') and were 'translating' it into Greek. See *New Redhouse Dictionary*, 3rd edn (Istanbul, 1979), s.v. 'mankafa', p. 730; Ph. Koukoules, *Βυζαντινῶν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός* VI (Athens, 1955), 461–2. A Basil Mankaphas and his nephew are attested as landowners in 1207 at Pege, in the bishopric of Hieron: MM VI, 151. See the Introduction, 84–5, for Theodore Mankaphas' power.

[18] Sabbas, whose surname Asidenos is known from a *prostaxis* of 1214 (Wilson and Darrouzès, 'Restes du cartulaire de Hiéra-Xérochoraphion', 14–15), was a landowner and independent ruler at Sampson, at the mouth of the Maeander, from 1204: see Orgels, 'Sabas Asidénos, dynaste de Sampsôn', 67–80; de Jerphanion, '*Σάμψων* et *Ἀμισός*, une ville à déplacer de neuf cent kilomètres', 257–67; Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 15 (map); *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 218.23. Sabbas is addressed by the emperor in

1214 as *sympentheros* and *sebastokrator*, indicating that Sabbas' loyalty was retained through a marriage tie to the emperor and the emperor's bestowal of a prestigious title on him. See Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, no. 213, p. 150. See also the Introduction, 85.

[19] David and Alexios Komnenos, grandsons of Andronikos I through his son Manuel (Varzos, *Ἡ Γενεαλογία* II, no. 161, pp 511–28), were in control of Trebizond from 1204, if not earlier. Akrop. gives David greater attention here and at §11. It was with him that Theodore I came into conflict in Paphlagonia, the region of northern Asia Minor between Galatia and the Black Sea; Alexios confined himself to Trebizond. David's epithet of Megas Komnenos is confirmed by a ms. note on his death (1212). See Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, no. 212, p. 149; the Introduction, 85–6.

[20] Akrop. lists all of Theodore's territory, from south to north. For Kelbianon, see §15.16. Heis.'s text reads *Κελβιανοῦ τε παντός* (Heis. 12.20), 'all of Kelbianon'. I have adopted the reading of ms. B, cod. Vat. Gr. 166, *παντὸς Μαιάνδρου*, 'all of the Maeander', and inserted a comma at Heis. 12.20 between 'Maeander' and 'Philadelphia'. Skout. (453.9) adds a *καὶ* between 'Maeander' and 'Philadelphia'.

[21] See the Introduction, 85.

[22] On Neokastra, see §15.16. For Philadelphia (modern Alaşehir), see §9, §41, §53.

8. But let my account of the east pause here, for it is my intention to narrate what happened to the emperor Alexios and all the other things that had already taken place in the west.[1] As I mentioned, the said emperor Alexios arrived in Thessalonike and was received by his sister-in-law, who was Hungarian in origin but had been married to the emperor Isaac after his wife's death. (Those who saw her said that she was very beautiful in appearance.)[2] Now when the Italians had divided the lands of the Roman empire into many parts,[3] Baldwin, who was from Flanders, was proclaimed emperor,[4] while the doge of Venice, who was also there in person, held not a small portion and was honoured with the dignity of despot which entitled him to have a quarter and half of a quarter of the whole[5] which the race of the Franks[6] had acquired. Since the marquis had borne a notable share in the alliance, he was honoured by Baldwin of Flanders as *rex* of Thessalonike,[7] and he took as wife the said Maria of Hungary who had formerly been attached to the emperor Isaac. It was by her, as I mentioned, that the emperor Alexios was received. But after a short time, when Alexios was caught plotting rebellion[8] with the people there, he was expelled with his wife[9] and daughter Eudokia. When he arrived in Corinth he joined her in marriage to the person who ruled the land there, Sgouros. This Sgouros also had usurped power for himself

after the conquest of the city of Constantine, and ruled over Corinth and the surrounding lands, as did others elsewhere.[10] Alexios had spent a short time in those parts when he learned from certain people that he was about to be caught, and he fled. He was seized by some men from Lombardy,[11] whom he encountered as he was making his way to his first cousin Michael.[12] This man at that time had control over a part of Old Epiros and was causing great trouble for the Italians who came to those parts. He was powerful in this land, for he ruled Ioannina and Arta and as far as Naupaktos. At all events, when the emperor Alexios was caught by the Lombards he was sold by them, along with his wife, to the said Michael, who gave much gold to those who held them.[13]

When the emperor Alexios had stayed with Michael a short time,[14] he determined to go to the sultan of Iconium,[15] whom they called Iathatines,[16] for he was his intimate associate.[17] The said Iathatines had escaped from the hands of his brother Azatines,[18] then ruler of the Muslims, and had fled to the city of Constantine; he was received by the emperor Alexios[19] and was baptized by him and adopted.[20] He fled, together with the emperor Alexios, when Alexios fled from the city of Constantine.[21] But many days had not passed when a man approached him secretly, reporting to him his brother's death. And Iathatines, dressed in pitiful rags, returned with the man and when he had made himself known to his followers, he was acclaimed ruler of the Persians.[22] He proved to be of use to the emperor Theodore also, at a time when he was hard-pressed, giving him an alliance and making peace;[23] for he called the empress Anna sister.[24]

§8 *For Alexios III's movements from 1203–11, as recounted here, see the Introduction, 79–81.*

[1] For 'the west' to refer to the Balkans, see §4.4, §43.2; Introduction, 34.

[2] For Isaac's first wife, Eirene, see §2.4. Margaret of Hungary, renamed Maria in Constantinople, daughter of king Bela III and sister of Emeric (1196–1205), became Isaac II's second wife late 1185/early 1186, when she was barely 10 years old: see below §11.2; Chon. 368.38–46; Prinzing, 'Demetrios-Kirche und Aseniden-Aufstand', 264–5, for the date of the wedding. Vill. (§185) who met her in the palace when Isaac II was reinstated in 1203, confirms that she was 'very beautiful'. (Skout., 453.12–15, omits this comment.) Boniface of Montferrat married her before the coronation of Baldwin in May 1204. See Vill. §§261–2; Chon. 598.4–7; §8.7 below.

[3] In March 1204, before the final successful assault on Constantinople, a pact was made in which the principles were laid down for the division of the empire, the election of the emperor and patriarch, and the distribution of the fiefs. See TTh I, 444–52; Vill. §§234–5. The division of 'the lands of the Roman empire' was laid down in a document known as the *Partitio*

Romaniae, drawn up later, sometime between the conquest of the city in April and the coronation of Baldwin in May. See the *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 125–305. For arguments on the date, and the model, for the *Partitio*, see Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 1–28.

[4] Baldwin of Flanders and Hainaut joined the crusade in 1200 together with his brother Henry (Vill. §8). He and Boniface of Montferrat, the leader of the crusading armies, were the two named candidates for the throne. Baldwin was elected by six Franks and six Venetians on 9 May 1204 and was crowned on 16 May. See Vill. §256–61, 263; Robert of Clari, §94–7; Chon. 596.33–597.71. On Baldwin see Wolff, 'Baldwin of Flanders and Hainaut', 281–322; Lock, 'The Latin emperors as heirs to Byzantium', 295–304.

[5] The 'doge of Venice', Enrico Dandolo, negotiated the treaty between Venice and the crusaders for provision of transport (see TTh I, 362–8; Vill. §§14–31), and made a military contribution to the crusade. On the Venetians' role in the Fourth Crusade, see Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 124–47; Queller and Madden, 'Some further arguments in defense of the Venetians on the Fourth Crusade', 433–73. According to the pact of March 1204, the Venetians were to divide equally with the Franks the three-quarters left after the Latin emperor had received his share of one-quarter (see TTh I, 446; Vill. §234; Robert of Clari, §68–9). The expression, 'a quarter and a half of a quarter' is a translation of the Latin formula used in documents to describe the Venetian possessions in the empire; it is always accompanied by a title: *dominus* and/or *dominator* in the case of the doge (TTh I, 567, III, 23; 26), *dominator* of the podestà, the elected official who represented Venice in Constantinople as the doge's subordinate (TTh I, 559, 570, 571; III, 23) and from 1219 on, despot and *dominator* for the podestà (TTh II, 205–6, 221, 253; III, 26). See Lazzarini, 'I titoli dei dogi di Venezia', 271–313. Although Skout. (453.18–19) also claims that Dandolo had the dignity of despot, adding that Baldwin bestowed it on him, Dandolo's name does not appear in any source with this title. He is designated as *dominus* and *dominator* (TTh I, 567: 1205) which do not appear to be the Latin equivalent of despot, as Jacoby argues, since the podestà Jacopo Tiepolo is qualified in 1219 and 1220 with the titles of despot and *dominator* in the same formula describing the territorial extent of the Venetian holdings. See TTh II, 205–6; Jacoby, 'The Venetian presence in the Latin empire', 141–9. It may be that Akrop. and Skout. apply the title of despot to doge Dandolo anachronistically but the possibility that he held it must be left open, in view of Skout.'s additional information. See Wolff, 'The oath of the Venetian podestà', 543 n. 4 and 550–1.

[6] Skout. (453.20) substitutes 'Italians' for Akrop.'s 'Franks'. Akrop. appears to use the two designations interchangeably (see above, §3, §5: 'Italians') to refer to all westerners without distinguishing their place of origin. See, also,

§9.9 and §15.9 where he speaks of the same group of soldiers once as 'Italians' and then as 'Franks'. See Karlin-Hayter, 'Notes sur le *ΛΑΤΙΝΙΚΟΝ* dans l'armée et les historiens de Nicée', 142–5.

[7] Boniface, marquis of Montferrat, was leader of the crusading forces: Vill. §41–4. As the unsuccessful candidate for the imperial throne he was to receive 'all the land on the other side of the Arm (of St George) toward Turkey and the island of Greece' (Vill. §258) but, in exchange for this territory, he requested the 'kingdom of Thessalonike', which was not listed in the *Partitio* (Vill. §258, §264). An argument arose over Thessalonike between Boniface and Baldwin which was finally resolved with the doge's intervention (Vill. §276–81, §299; Robert of Clari, §99–102; §110; Chon. 598–600). In September 1204 Boniface received the 'kingdom' which stretched from Mosynopolis in the east to the Vardar river west of Thessalonike. See Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 7–8, 16–17. Akrop. refers to Boniface as 'rex', 'king' of Thessalonike, as do also Robert of Clari (§110) and Aubry (885). However, Boniface's name does not appear with the title in contemporary documentary sources (see Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 76). On the contrary, he refers to himself as '*regni Thessalonicensis et Crete dominus*' in a letter of May 1205 to Innocent III: Delisle, 'Lettres inédites d'Innocent III', 408 and n. 1. It appears that the title was attributed anachronistically to Boniface, since Robert of Clari, Aubry, and Akrop. were writing after the coronation in 1209 of Demetrios, Boniface's son by Maria of Hungary. See Robert of Clari, §119; Ferjančić, 'Počeci Solunskje Kraljevine (1204–9)', 101–15. For Maria of Hungary, see §8.2.

[8] The chronology of events is not clear. The plot in which Alexios III was implicated can perhaps be identified with a rebellion reported by Chon. (619.44–620.70) which dates to the spring of 1205.

[9] For Euphrosyne, who joined Alexios III in Mosynopolis, having left Constantinople with Alexios V Mourtzouphlos and her daughter Eudokia, see §2.15, §5.8, §10.9.

[10] Akrop. presents (Leo) Sgouros as an independent ruler who seized power 'after the conquest' of Constantinople in 'Corinth and the surrounding lands'. However, his rebellion dates to 1200–2, when he seized control of Nauplion, Corinth, and Argos. He began his bid for independent power in Nauplion, where his father seems to have held an office or command, according to Chon. (605.65–70). See Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 155, n. 172, and Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 138–9. After 1204, Sgouros attacked Athens unsuccessfully and took Thebes. See Chon. 605–8; Michael Chon., ed. Lampros, 169–72; ed. Kolovou, 139–41; Kordoses, *Ἡ κατάκτηση τῆς νότιας Ἑλλάδας ἀπό τούς Φράγκους*, 68. According to Vill. (§301, §324, §331–2, §389) and Chon. (609–11), Sgouros was active in resisting Boniface in his advance through

Greece. The marriage of Eudokia to Sgouros took place in Larissa, not Corinth (Chon. 608.47–60), probably in the autumn of 1204. This was Eudokia's third marriage. See §5. Skout. adds (453.27–8) that Alexios III bestowed the title of despot on Sgouros. See Magdalino, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese', 316–23, esp. 321; the Introduction, 79, 81.

[11] These are presumably Boniface of Montferrat's men. See the Introduction, 80, for Alexios III's movements.

[12] Michael Komnenos Doukas, to whom Akrop. always refers simply as Michael (see §14), was the illegitimate son of the *sebastokrator* John Doukas, whose parents Constantine Angelos and Theodora Komnene, daughter of Alexios I, were the founders of the Angelos dynasty: TTh II, 119; Nicol, 'The prosopography of the Byzantine aristocracy', 82. The fathers of Alexios III and Michael were brothers, thus making Alexios and Michael first cousins. See Chon. 458.43; 529.18–24; Polemis, *Doukai*, nos 40, 45, pp 87–8, 91–2. Akrop. says of Michael that he 'was powerful' (*δυναστεύων*), a variant of *dynastes*, a word used to describe 'strong men', pre-eminent local *archontes* or influential outsiders, 'whose unofficial power was recorded only when it got out of hand': Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 155 and n. 172. He took control in Epiros after the capture of Constantinople. According to Vill. (§301), he was in the company of Boniface of Montferrat before he left to go to Arta where he married the daughter of a local official, took control of the land, and made war on the marquis. For variations on this story see Aubry (885.48–886.2), the Life of St Theodora of Arta, ed. Moustoxydes, 42–3; PG 127, col. 904; also Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 148–9. His previous connections with Epiros are unknown. Michael's authority extended over the part of northwest Greece known as 'Old Epiros' which included Ioannina, Arta, and as far as Naupaktos in the south. Cf. Chon. 638.43–5: Aitolia, Nikopolis region, and as far as Dyrrachion. For Ioannina which Michael is said to have enlarged, see Kordoses, *Τά βυζαντινά Γιάννενα*, 68–74. For 'Old Epiros', as opposed to 'New Epiros', see §80 and *Le Synekdèmos d'Hiéroklès et l'Opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre*, ed. E. Honigmann (Brussels, 1939), 19–20. On the foundation of the 'despotate' of Epiros, see §14 and the Introduction, 95–7.

[13] See, also, the Life of St Theodora of Arta, ed. Moustoxydes, 43;*PG* 127.904.

[14] Alexios III returned from Lombardy by 1210 and was with the sultan by 1211, the date of the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander. These are the only fixed dates for his movements.

[15] Iconium (modern Konya), capital of the Seljuks from the early twelfth century. For another form of the name, see §41.12: *τὴν Ἰκονιέων*.

[16] Akrop. and Greg. (I, 17.10) refer to this son of Kilidj Arslan II (1155–92) as Iathatines, the Greek transliteration for the honorific, Ghiyath al-Din, 'aid of the faith', while Chon. calls him Kaykhusraw, a name derived from Iranian mythology. See Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, II, 112–13; *EI* IV (1978), 816. On Kaykhusraw I (1192–6; 1205–11) in Constantinople, see the Introduction, 93.

[17] See also at §6 where Akrop. uses the same word to describe Theodore I's relationship with 'Iathatines'.

[18] Kaykhusraw's brother, Rukn al-Din, seized power in 1197 and ruled until 1204. See Wittek, 'Von der byzantinischen zur türkischen Toponymie', 21–3. Akrop. mistakenly calls Kaykhusraw's brother Azatines, a Greek transliteration for Izz al-Din (Kilidj Arslan III), who was Kaykhusraw's nephew, the son of Rukn al-Din, who ruled briefly in 1204–5 before Kaykhusraw's return to power. See *EI* V (1986), 104.

[19] According to Chon. (521–2), Kaykhusraw sought Alexios' help twice. From Ibn Bibi (21, 27–31), it can be surmised that he fled to Constantinople in 1199–1200. Chon. and Akrop. differ in their accounts of the reception Alexios III gave the sultan. Chon. states that no help was forthcoming, nor was Kaykhusraw treated in a manner befitting his noble birth. However, Akrop.'s report of a friendly reception is corroborated by Ibn Bibi (27).

[20] Of the Greek sources only Akrop. mentions Kaykhusraw's baptism and adoption by Alexios III explicitly and explains the sultan's aid to Theodore I in terms of their kinship: 'he called the empress Anna sister'. An anonymous Seljuk chronicler gives a garbled version of the relations of Alexios and Kaykhusraw through baptism and/or adoption: Korobeinikov, 'Two sultans in Constantinople', 70. It is not clear from Akrop.'s formulation, he 'was baptized by him and adopted', whether adoption through baptism is meant or baptism followed by adoption. In either case Kaykhusraw could have called the emperor Alexios III's daughter his 'sister'. See Macrides, 'The Byzantine godfather', 139–62 and Macrides, 'Kinship by arrangement: The case of adoption', 109–18. Kaykhusraw was himself the son of Kilidj Arslan II who had been adopted by Manuel I. There are other twelfth-century examples of sultans who were adopted by emperors without a baptism and of baptisms of sultans and other Turks without adoption. See Zachariadou, 'Religious dialogue between Byzantines and Turks during the Ottoman expansion', 295–6, 299; Macrides, 'Dynastic marriages and political kinship', 273; Brand, 'The Turkish element in Byzantium, eleventh–twelfth centuries', 12, 16, 17.

[21] Akrop. is the only source to mention Kaykhusraw's flight from Constantinople together with Alexios III in July 1203. Robert of Clari (§52) claims that after Alexios III's flight from the city and the reinstatement of Isaac and Alexios IV, the sultan of Iconium asked the crusaders for help against his younger brother and was refused.

[22] Kaykhusraw was reinstated in February/March 1205, after the death of his brother, Rukn al-Din (1204). See Wittek, 'Von der byzantinischen zur türkischen Toponymie', 23–31. According to Ibn Bibi (30, 37), Kaykhusraw was with his father-in-law, Manuel Maurozomes, independent ruler in the Maeander valley, when he was approached with the news of his brother's death.

[23] Akrop. makes reference only to alliance and peace, not to the hostilities in 1205 and 1206 between Theodore and Kaykhusraw (with Maurozomes), known from Chon. 626.47–56, 72–5, and Chon., *Orationes*, 136–7. The alliance mentioned here could be the one to which he refers at §6.7, or another between Theodore and Kaykhusraw, made in 1205 and known from Chon.'s *History* (638.65–9) and oration (*Orationes*, 136–7). For the date see Dölger-Wirth, no. 1668b, p. 2.

[24] See §8.20.

9. Every effort of the emperor Alexios was devoted to reaching Iathatines. For Alexios could not bear to go to the emperor, his son-in-law, Theodore. And so he departed from Michael's land with provisions[1] and, with the help of a favourable wind, he came to anchor at the city of Attaleia.[2] He was welcomed most warmly by the sultan. The emperor Theodore was residing in Nicaea,[3] and an embassy came to him from the sultan, announcing the arrival of the emperor, his father-in-law, and [stating] that he was unjust in seizing another's realm. The emperor was disturbed by these words and no small fear shook him. For the sultan had the emperor Alexios as an excuse; his aim in truth was to overrun and plunder or even subjugate the entire territory of the Romans.[4] As the saying goes, 'matters stood on the razor's edge'[5] for the emperor Theodore. Assembling his men, then, he tested them, asking whether they would stand by him or his father-in-law, the emperor Alexios.[6] They answered with all their force, in unison, as of one mind, that they would either live with him or perish together. Gaining confidence, then, from the words of his subjects, the emperor left Nicaea, keeping the sultan's ambassador with him. Travelling quickly, he reached the city of Philadelphia.[7]

The sultan, taking with him also the emperor Alexios, whom he brought along as bait, made his attack on Antioch. This city dominates the region of the Maeander. It was his aim to get control of it. To this end, he set up siege towers and besieged the city; it was on the point of being captured. This was what the emperor Theodore feared, for it was true that if the sultan got control of it there would be nothing to hinder him from subduing the whole territory of the Romans. Staking the battle on the throw of a die, or rather, to speak truthfully, in the Lord Christ whose name we pious people bear as an ensign or seal,[8] he quickened his march, ordering that no one bring a tent or burden or anything else which was of no use in the battle, nothing

apart from the necessities, a little food and clothing. His entire army numbered 2000, 800 of whom were Italians,[9] noble men and strong of arm, as time showed; the rest were Romans.

§9 *Akrop. relates the background to the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander. See §10, and the Introduction, 36–8.*

[1] Constantine (see §14.2), the brother of Michael Komnenos Doukas, is said to have accompanied Alexios III to Asia Minor, according to a letter of John Apokaukos to Demetrios Chomatenos: 'he sailed to the east together with the emperor kyr Alexios who had been taken captive' (ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, '*Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀχρίδος*', 243.14–19). See the Introduction, 94.

[2] The coastal city of Attaleia (Antalya) was in the control of Aldebrandinos in 1204. See Chon. 639.73–5. Kaykhusraw I conquered it in March 1207: Ibn Bibi, 44–6; Chon. 639.1–640.12. For the date of Alexios III's arrival in Asia Minor, see above, §8.14.

[3] See §7 and Introduction, 87.

[4] Akrop. and Skout. (see §10.8) are the only authors to mention Alexios III's involvement in this battle. Ibn Bibi (ed. Duda, 47) states that the sultan attacked because Theodore blocked the way into his territory and broke the terms of the treaty they had made.

[5] *Il.* 10.173; Hdt. 6.11. *CPG* II, p. 28.

[6] According to Ibn Bibi (48), Theodore I sent letters to all his people, asking for their help.

[7] Ibn Bibi (48) also mentions Philadelphia (Alaşehir) and gives the impression that the battle was fought there. On Philadelphia's importance for the 'empire of Nicaea', see below, §41, §53.

[8] Akrop. refers indirectly to the soldiers' wearing of the sign of the cross. His language here is reminiscent of Chon.'s oration celebrating Theodore's victory over the sultan: 'these victories are yours by the sign of the cross . . . which you enjoined your soldiers to wear as an ensign [*σύσσημον*]': *Orationes*, 175.4–6; Macrides, 'From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi', 280 and n. 52. For Akrop.'s sources, see the Introduction, 36–7. The wearing of the cross may have been adopted especially for the large number of Latins fighting in Theodore's army: see §9.9.

[9] The large number of Latin soldiers in Theodore I's army (see also §10, §15.9) was remarked upon by pope Innocent III (PL 216.353D–354D) and the Latin emperor Henry (ed. Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 414.86–8). Theodore was able to pay them more than the Latin emperor: see Innocent's letter (PL 216.354A) and the patriarch Michael Autoreianos' letter to Theodore's soldiers (Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 118.47–8).

10. When the emperor was near Antioch he let the Persian ambassador go to his lord. The ambassador went and informed the sultan of the emperor's approach; he had great difficulty believing this. Then the ambassador confirmed with oaths that the emperor was nearby. When the sultan heard this, he assembled his forces as quickly as he could and drew them up for battle. The Italians were the first to attack the sultan's forces but the number of Muslims was great. Exhibiting deeds of great prowess and an even more noble soul, nearly all the Italians fell,[1] having put many times their number to the sword. When they had overcome the Italians, the Muslims easily prevailed over the Roman forces also. Some fled with headlong speed, a few endured, awaiting the outcome of the battle. When, then, the sultan gained control of the battle, he sought out the emperor and someone pointed the emperor out to him; he was in difficulty. Then he rushed as quickly as he could towards the emperor, trusting in the strength of his body. They recognized each other. The sultan struck the emperor on the head with a mace and he fell from his horse, for he was dizzied by the stroke.[2] The horse also lost its footing, they say, because of the stroke; I do not know if it also received a second blow from the sultan. So, the emperor, freeing himself from his horse and as if strengthened by a divine force,[3] stood on his feet and drew his sword from its sheath and, as the sultan was turning from him and saying with insolence, 'Take him away',[4] the emperor struck the hind legs of the sultan's horse; the sultan was mounted on a mare of enormous size.[5] And so the sultan was thrown down, as if from a tower, and suddenly his head was cut off, although neither the emperor nor any one of those who was with the emperor knew by whom he had been decapitated.[6] So, in this way, the emperor was victorious, although he was largely defeated for, left with meagre forces, he could not advance at all.[7]

This victory gave the Romans occasion for relief, for the Muslims thereupon made an inviolable truce with the Romans.[8] Henceforth the emperor had a respite from battle on this side, while he devoted himself to the wars of the Italians. He also took his father-in-law, the emperor Alexios, whom he found present at the battle and, paying him due honours, brought him to Nicaea, stripped him of his imperial insignia and ordered him to reside in the monastery of Hyakinthos. There he died.[9] His wife Euphrosyne ended her life in the land of Arta and her corpse was buried there.[10]

§10 *The battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander, June 1211. For the date, see Ibn Bibi, 50; Schreiner,* Kleinchroniken *II, 190. Other contemporary sources for the battle are Chon.'s oration (*Orationes, *170–5) and a letter (1212) of the emperor Henry (ed. Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 414.83–415.96). For later authors who describe the battle, see Ephraim, 7600–55; Greg. I, 17–21; the anonymous author of the*

Life *of the emperor John Vatatzes (ed. Heisenberg, 163.215–16). See the Introduction, 36–8, for Akrop.'s sources.*

[1] The 'Italians' in the army of Theodore, 800 in number, constituted a formidable group of fighters: §9.9. See also the remarks of the Latin emperor Henry about the loss of these men: §15.9.

[2] Ibn Bibi, 49, and Chon. (*Orationes*, 172.1–7) mention the emperor's fall.

[3] Cf. Chon., *Orationes*, 173.28–32: 'Christ took you up as if on his back... and gave you sure footing'; also, 172.3–7.

[4] Chon. also remarks on the sultan's insolence: *Orationes*, 171.17–19, 173.22–4. Ibn Bibi (49) reports that Kaykhusraw addressed Theodore, 'O, you, scabby head' but allowed Theodore to get up and ride away on his horse.

[5] The size of the sultan's horse is likewise commented on by Ibn Bibi, 49, and Chon. (*Orationes,* 174.10–11) who also mentions the blow to the legs of the horse (172.7–8).

[6] Chon. (*Orationes*, 171.17–18) gives the emperor Theodore credit for decapitating Kaykhusraw, while Ibn Bibi (49) ascribes the deed to a Frank in Theodore's army and states that Theodore gave 20 000 dinars to be distributed as alms at the sultan's funeral.

[7] Akrop. expresses the outcome of the battle in terms of a paradox. See below at §15.9 where the emperor Henry makes a similar comment about the outcome of this battle.

[8] Kaykhusraw's son and successor, Izz al-Din Kaykhaus (1211–20), made a truce with Theodore soon after the battle. See Ibn Bibi, 57–8; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1682, pp 5–6.

[9] Skout. (457.3–7=*Additamenta*, no. 6, p. 278) differs from Akrop. in saying that the senate and army sentenced Alexios to blinding. The monastery of Hyakinthos in Nicaea was the seat of the patriarchate, according to a synodal act of 1209: see Chatzepsaltes, '*Ἡ ἐκκλησία Κύπρου καὶ τὸ ἐν Νίκαια οἰκουμενικόν Πατριαρχεῖον*', 141–2; Janin, *Les Églises et les monastères*, 121–4; Foss, *Nicaea*, 97–101. The monastery was the burial place also of the emperor Theodore and his wife Anna. See §18.14.

[10] For Euphrosyne Doukaina Kamatere whom Akrop. mentions by name for the first time here, see §8; also Garland, *Byzantine empresses*, 210–28.

11. The emperor Theodore also prevailed over the ruler of Paphlagonia, David, and brought to terms Herakleia and Amastris and all the surrounding land and fortresses.[1]

It is my intention in this history to write in turn about events in the west. But so that my history may be intelligible to all, it is necessary to say a few things by way of introduction. When the emperor Isaac ruled over the city of

Constantine and his wife died, he married the woman whom I previously mentioned who came from Hungary and was the daughter of the ruler of the Hungarians.[2] Since, then, he was to have a wedding and it was a royal one, the expenditure for it had to be commensurate. Therefore, sheep, pigs, and oxen were collected from every province of the Roman empire.[3] But since the land of the Bulgarians[4] rears more of these than do other places, more animals were also demanded from it. Now the Bulgarian race was not at first party to a treaty with the Romans and was the cause of many wars with them, enslavements, conquests of cities and countless other terrible things, and this over many years, but finally they were subjugated by the emperor Basil whom legend named the Bulgarslayer[5] because of this. Until the time of the emperor Isaac the race was tributary to the Romans but, giving this as a reason,[6] it plotted an uprising. A certain man, Asan[7] by name, rose up and ruled over the land as emperor, subjecting everything between the Haimos and the Ister. He was the cause of not a little trouble to the Romans. For the Bulgarians, having the Scyths as allies,[8] did many terrible things to the land of the Romans.

The emperor Isaac, angered by this, assembled the whole Roman army and marched out against them.[9] He followed the coast and, passing by way of the city of Mesembria,[10] went into the Haimos. Asan, with the army under him, entered the fortress whose name is Strinavos.[11] Having pitched tent there also, the emperor Isaac laid siege to the Bulgarians, but he was outmanoeuvred by them. For one of the Bulgarians, assuming the guise of a deserter, went to the emperor and informed him of an attack of the Scyths. The emperor was terrified by the report and, even though he would have captured the fortress on the following day, he rose up and departed from the place. He did not, however, march out by the road on which he had come but, deceived by the Bulgarian, he determined to go by the supposedly quicker way.[12] The Bulgarians, then, swooped down on him as he was passing through, when he was in a defile,[13] and destroyed the entire army under him and plundered all the army's baggage, including the emperor's own. Many Romans fell; those who survived along with the emperor were stripped bare and very few in number. Thereupon, the Bulgarian race became puffed up, having gained much booty from the Romans but also the more valuable of the emperor's insignia.[14] They took with them the emperor's 'pyramids'[15] and vessels for formal use,[16] and money in quantity, and the imperial cross itself. One of the priests had thrown it down; after a short time the Bulgarians found it in the river. It was made of gold, but it had at its centre a piece of the Holy Wood on which the Lord Christ was nailed, and it was formed in the shape of a cross with many small compartments in which there were relics of the most illustrious martyrs, the milk of the Mother of God, and a piece of Her Girdle, and many other things that are held sacred.[17] The emperor Isaac went to the city of Constantine like a fugitive.

§11 *Akrop. gives the background to thirteenth-century Byzantine–Bulgarian relations: the foundation of the 'Second Bulgarian Empire' in 1185 and Isaac II's campaign of 1190/1. On the date see Prinzing, 'Demetrios-Kirche und Aseniden-Aufstand', 257–65. The account of Theodore I's victory over David Komnenos at the beginning of §11 belongs thematically and chronologically with §10 which concerns Asia Minor and the battle against Kaykhusraw in 1211, and not with §11, where Heisenberg has inserted it (see §11.1).*

[1] Akrop. implies, by placing his mention of this event after the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander in 1211, that Theodore I's victory over David Komnenos occurred around the same time. However, Nicholas Mesarites, a contemporary of the event, refers to a victory over David's brother Alexios in 1214: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', III, 19.2–4; 25–6; 33.15–30; 68–73 (commentary); Vasiliev, 'Mesarites as a source', 180–2. Akrop. is either mistaken about the person over whom Theodore was victorious or he is referring to an earlier victory over David (before his death in December 1212) which is not otherwise attested. If the latter is the case, Alexios would have won back Herakleia and Amastris on the Black Sea coast and held them until Theodore's second victory in 1214. See Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 141 and n. 67. On David and Alexios, see §7.19 and the Introduction, 85–6.

[2] On Margaret-Maria of Hungary see §8.2. The marriage took place in late 1185/early 1186: Chon. 368.42–6; van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 88–90; Prinzing, 'Demetrios-Kirche und Aseniden-Augstand', 264–5. On Isaac's first wife, see §2.4.

[3] Chon., 368.47–8, reports that Isaac paid for the wedding celebrations from the imperial estates and not from public funds.

[4] Akrop. speaks only of the Bulgarians, whereas Chon. (368.50–2) and western sources contemporary with the uprising refer to those responsible for it as Vlachs. On the role of the Vlachs in the formation of the Second Bulgarian Empire see Wolff, 'Second Bulgarian Empire', 180–1. On the Bulgarians, see the Introduction, 90–2.

[5] The Bulgars, a Hunnic tribe in origin, began to settle in the Balkan peninsula from the seventh century. After a series of wars Basil II (976–1025) brought about their subjugation to the Byzantine empire in 1018. See Skyl. (348–9) for the last and most memorable of his expeditions. The earliest dated references to Basil II as the 'Bulgarslayer' appear in Chon. (373.70) and Michael Choniates (ed. Lampros, II, 354.20–1; ed. Kolovou, 285.3). It would appear that the epithet was created in the context of the emergence of the Second Bulgarian Empire and not earlier. See §13.18 for 'Romanslayer'. See Stephenson, 'The legend of Basil the Bulgar-slayer', 116–29.

[6] 'The 'reason' is the taking of livestock for the wedding. See the discussion at §2.8 on the translation of 'πρόφασις' (Heis. 18.22). Although Chon.'s explanation (368.47–57) of the origins of the Vlach rebellion is difficult to construe, it would appear that Isaac's agents exceeded their instructions, taking livestock (*τὴν τῶν οἰκείων θρεμμάτων ἀπαγωγὴν*) not only from the imperial estates but also from Anchialos and neighbouring towns, where the Vlachs had brought their cattle to graze. For this interpretation, see Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 134 and n. 99; van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 70 and n. 83.

[7] Akrop. mentions only (John I) Asan (1185–96) here, introducing his brothers Peter and John later (§12). See the Introduction, 36, 91. For Asan, see Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 27–35. For the date of the revolt, October 1185, see Prinzing, 'Demetrios-Kirche und Aseniden-Aufstand', 257–65. For the land between the Ister (Danube) and the Balkan mountains (Haimos) see also §35, §37; see Pach. I, 278–9, n. 3 for 'Haimos' and Asdracha, 'Le terme "Haemos" chez Pachymère', 137–42. See also §34, §54, §56, §59.

[8] The Cumans, whom Akrop. consistently calls the 'Scyths', a nomadic central Asian people who lived north of the Danube, were allies of the Vlach–Bulgarians from the beginning of the revolt: Chon. 373–4; Wolff, 'Second Bulgarian Empire', 198–201. For a description of the Cumans and their way of life, see Robert of Clari, §65. See also below, at §13, §25, §61, where the Cumans are mentioned as allies of the Bulgarians. See at §35, §40, for John III's resettlement of Cumans in Anatolia.

[9] The expedition of 1190/1 is described by Chon. 428.63–432.60. For the problematic date, see van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 62–4. See the Introduction, 91, for a comparison of accounts.

[10] Mesembria (modern Nesebăr) on the Black Sea coast: Soustal, *Thrakien*, 355–9. According to Chon. (428.65–6), Isaac II went inland from Anchialos (modern Pomorie), on the gulf of Burgas, south of Mesembria: Soustal, *Thrakien*, 175–7. For the 'Haimos' or 'Balkan' mountains, see §11.7.

[11] Only Akrop. mentions a siege at a place called Strinavos which he describes as a 'fortress': *πολίχνιον* (Heis. 19.12). For *polichnion* as 'fortress' see Zachariadou, '*Πολίχνη καὶ πολίχνιον*', 242–7. Mutafchiev, 'Trnovo i Strinava', 1154–63, argues that Strinavos is a scribal error for Trnovos. Heisenberg ('Prolegomena', *Opera* I, xviii, n. 2), however, judged Strinavos to be the name of Trnovo at the time of the siege and therefore retained it in his text, even though cod. Vat. gr. 163 (fourteenth century) gives 'Trnovos': see Heis. p. 19.7 apparatus; Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 67, n. 2. Trnovo was the site of the uprising of Asan and Peter in 1185 (Prinzing, 'Demetrios-Kirche und Aseniden-Aufstand', 263–4). Chon. (470.75–8), writing about the late twelfth century, calls Trnovo a *polis*. From other indications it also appears to have been the capital of the 'Second Bulgarian Empire' at least from the early thirteenth century. See below

at §20, §34, §36, §73, §84. See V. Gjuselev, 'Hauptstädte, Residenzen und Hofkultur im mittelalterlichen Bulgarien, 7.-14. Jh.', *Études balkaniques* 2 (1991), 82–105, here at 96–105.

[12] Chon. (429.72–6) also reports the emperor's hasty departure by way of a shorter route, after an expedition of two months' duration, although he does not mention a siege or deception. In his account, Isaac departs suddenly because he suspects an impending attack by Cumans. It was the time of year which was not unfavourable to their crossing of the Danube.

[13] According to Chon. 429.89–90, the narrow pass in which the attack took place was a defile leading to Beroe (Stara Zagora). It has been identified as the Šipka pass, between Gabrovo and Kazanluk in the Stara Planina: Nikov, 'Die Stadt und das Gebiet von Krn-Krounos', 231–2.

[14] Chon. (429.75–431.45) does not mention the booty taken but gives a detailed description of the loss of life. For Akrop.'s source of knowledge of the booty, see the Introduction, 45, and below, §84.2.

[15] The word is a *hapax*. Skout. (404.23) substitutes the expression '*kalyptra* of the head' or 'head-covering', for Akrop.'s 'pyramids'. At §40 (Heis. p. 67.17–18), Akrop. calls the 'pyramid' an 'imperial symbol', covered with pearls and with a red gem at its summit. He uses 'pyramid' of head-coverings in these two passages (§11, §40), whereas elsewhere he speaks of a *kalyptra* (§87 for Baldwin II's head-piece, 'Latin in shape'; §88 for Michael VIII's head-covering on the occasion of the entry into Constantinople, 1261) and of a diadem (§21: coronation of Theodore Komnenos Doukas; §77: coronation of Michael VIII). It may be that pyramid/*kalyptra* were words interchangeable with 'diadem' and used to refer to a crown. For this hypothesis, see Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/1, 165–7; IV/2, 578 and n. 4. In this case the 'pyramid' describes the hemispherical crown, as known from Anna Komnene's description (3.4.1). It is more likely, however, that pyramid/*kalyptra* describe a hat worn by emperors (and office-holders) known from literary and visual evidence from the twelfth century and later: see Chon. 252.75–6: *πυραμιδουμένην καλύπτραν τῇ κεφαλῇ* (Andronikos I before he became emperor); Chon. 346.30; Greg. I, 170.16–21; 567.16–20. Tall, pointed hats (pyramidal in shape), worn by emperor and officials, can be seen in late Byzantine representations: e.g. John VIII Kantakouzenos (Sinait. gr. 2123, f. 30v: Spatharakis, *The Portrait*, 51–3, pl. 20–2; Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 70 and pl. 77q). Such hats are sometimes identified with the *skiadion* known from Ps.-Kod. (ed. Verpeaux, 141 n. 1, 145–8, 151–66), worn by officials and emperor alike, although differing in colour and decoration according to the wearer's rank. On the *skiadion* see also *ODB* III, 1910.

[16] I have translated Heis. 19.24: *φιάλας τῶν ἐπισήμων* as 'vessels for formal use', understanding these to be silver tableware used for special dining guests

or as gifts, on analogy with the baggage described in Constantine VII's military treatises: ed. Haldon, *Three treatises*, 106–11, esp. 108.217–18.

[17] This cross, a *staurotheke*, was, according to Skout. (404.31–405.1–4), the cross Constantine the Great took on campaign, as did his successors. For crosses on campaign, see Constantine VII's military treatises, ed. Haldon, *Three treatises*, 124 (text), 245–6 (commentary). A late Athonite tradition identifies the cross lost by Isaac with one given to Vatopedi in the fourteenth century by the Serbian prince Lazar (1371–89). See Frolow, *La relique de la Vraie Croix*, 521, no. 756. See, too, Ševčenko, 'The Limburg Staurothek and its relics', 289–94.

12. From then on the Romans had not a little trouble from the Bulgarians; also when the emperor Isaac was blinded by his brother Alexios and the latter had seized the Roman sceptre, many wars were waged on the Romans by the Bulgarians in the area of Philippopolis and Beroe. It was there that the *protostrator* Kammytzes was captured by Bulgarians while fighting,[1] when John, the brother of Asan, was ruler.[2] For the forementioned Asan had two brothers, of whom one was called Peter,[3] the other John. Asan kept John with him, but Peter he ordered to rule over a portion which he cut off from his own province. Great Preslav,[4] Provatous,[5] and the area around them were given to Peter by his brother Asan as his own inheritance. For this reason these places until now are called 'Peter's land'.[6] Asan ruled over the Bulgarian race as emperor[7] for nine years when he was murdered by his first cousin Ivanko; he immediately fled.[8] Then John, Asan's brother, ruled over the race as emperor because the Bulgarians did not want to raise Peter to the royal office,[9] and Asan's son John was not yet of age.

§12 *Akrop. describes Byzantine–Bulgarian relations during the reign of Alexios III (1195–1203).*

[1] Manuel Kammytzes' campaign in 1199 against Ivanko near Philippopolis ended in his captivity. See Chon. 473; 511–14; Brand, *Byzantium confronts the west*, 125–6, 130–1. For Ivanko see below, §12.8. Kammytzes, a cousin of Isaac II and Alexios III, held the title of *protostrator* under both emperors: Chon. 403.61; 498.17–18; *Orationes*, 106. Laurent, *Les bulles métriques*, no. 319, pp 169–70. For the title of *protostrator* which Chon. (600.46–8) equates with the western title of 'marshal' (*μαρισκάλδος*), see Kyrris, '*Στράτορος* = (*ΠΡΩΤΟ*)*ΣΤΡΑΤΩΡ* or Strator: a military institution in XVth century Cyprus', 132–4. The Kam(m)ytzes family is one of the 'golden chain' of families mentioned by Pach. (I, 93.12) in the later thirteenth century. For John Kammytzes, *megas hetaireiarches* under John III, see §24. For Philippopolis

(modern Plovdiv) and Beroe (modern Stara Zagora), see Soustal, *Thrakien*, 399–404, 203–5.

[2] John (1197–1207), known as Kalojan on his coins and in his letters, and Ioannes, Ioannitzes or Johannitius in Greek and Latin sources, was crowned king in November 1204 by a legate, cardinal Leo, sent by pope Innocent III. See Robert of Clari, §65; Theiner, *Vetera monumenta slavorum meridionalium*, I, nos 60, 61, pp 39–40; 1204 letter of Kalojan, 'king of the Bulgars and Vlachs', to pope Innocent III: ed. Hageneder, VII, 409–11; Sweeney, 'Innocent III, Hungary and the Bulgarian coronation: a study in medieval papal diplomacy', 320–34. The gold signet ring formerly attributed to Kalojan (Dujčev, 'La bague-sceau du roi bulgare Kalojan', 173–83) has been shown to date from the fourteenth century. See Totev, 'Two Byzantine signet rings from Bulgaria', 11 and n. 2. For John (Kalojan), see also Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 43–68.

[3] Chon. mentions two brothers, Asan and Peter, as leaders of the rebellion, and speaks of Peter as the more prominent. According to him, it was Peter, and not Asan, who adopted the symbols of the imperial office: Chon. 369, 371, 372; *Orationes*, 7.27–31. An account of Frederick Barbarossa's march through the Balkans in 1189 likewise refers to Peter as the 'ruler of the Vlachs and the Bulgarians': 'Expeditio Friderici' in *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I*, ed. A. Chroust, MGH, Scriptores rerum germanicarum, n.s. V (1928), 58. Akrop. consistently assigns Peter to a secondary position. See §11.7. Kazhdan ('La date de la rupture entre Pierre et Asen', 167–74) dates the split between the brothers to 1193 by means of orations delivered in that year. Asan then took over until his death in 1196, when 'the leadership of the Mysoi again passed to Peter': Chon. 472.19. After Asan's death Peter and Kalojan ruled jointly: Chon. 472.23–4; Brand, *Byzantium confronts the west*, 125, 127. For Peter, see Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 40–2; Iurukova and Penchev, *Bulgarski srednovekovii pechati i moneti*, 76–8.

[4] According to Chon. (372.43–6), Peter and Asan attacked Great Preslav, on the Tiča river, soon after their revolt from Byzantine rule. He does not report their conquest of it. Preslav had important associations as the capital of the First Bulgarian Empire, built by Omortag in 821. See Zlatarski, *Istoriia* I, 443–4; Runciman, *A History of the First Bulgarian Empire*, 77–8.

[5] Provatous (modern Provadija), in the region of Varna (MM I, 502: 'Varna and the places around it . . . Provatous'), not to be confused with Provatou, near Adrianople: Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 148.

[6] Akrop. makes here a rare reference to his time of writing—'until now'. See the Introduction, 33. 'Peter's land' appears from Akrop.'s description to have been in the area of Great Preslav and Provatous. It cannot be located more accurately.

[7] The Bulgarian rulers were addressed by the Byzantine emperor as *basileus* which I have rendered as 'emperor' and not 'king' (*rex*, *tsar*), since in the case of the Byzantine rulers *basileus* is also rendered as 'emperor'. See below at §34 where Akrop. refers to John II Asan as *autokrator*.

[8] Asan ruled from 1193–6. For the circumstances of Asan's murder in 1196, see Chon. 469–70. Ivanko, known as Asan's first cousin only from Akrop.'s account (see Skout. 458.5: cousin), did not flee after killing Asan but, according to Chon., attempted to take Trnovo which Peter defended. He was forced to abandon the siege and went to Constantinople where he was betrothed to Alexios III's granddaughter and given command of the area around Philippopolis. He revolted and Kammytzes was sent against him in 1199. See above, §12.1. Alexios III finally captured him in 1200: Chon. 470–3, 509–14, 518–19.

[9] According to Chon. 472.23–4, Peter and John ruled together after Asan's death, until Peter's death in 1197.

13. When this John was named emperor of the Bulgarians, he became the cause of many misfortunes to the Romans but, fortunately, to the Italians as well. For he was emperor of the Bulgarians when the city of Constantine was captured.[1] As the Italians had subjected all the land of Macedonia,[2] when Baldwin, the first of them to rule in Constantinople, was directing their affairs as emperor, they sent word also to the city of Hadrian[3] that it should become subject to them. For the emperor of the Bulgarians, John, had just subdued Philippopolis[4] and had made a great enslavement of the Romans from that place. As the Adrianopolitans were not willing to become subject to the Italians,[5] the Italians marched out against them, the emperor Baldwin himself accompanying them, as well as the representative of the doge of Venice in Constantinople.[6] Since the inhabitants of the city of Hadrian were in no small distress, they sent to the emperor of the Bulgarians, John, so that he might join with them and deliver them from the impending danger. He readily accepted this[7] and took Scyths with him; since he was not able to fight the Latins in the open,[8] he determined to overcome them by stratagems. While he positioned himself far from Adrianople, he sent the Scyths against the Italians to use Scythian warfare against them. Now, it is the custom of the Italians to ride on towering horses covered in armour and to be clad in full armour. They, therefore, move against their enemies with difficulty; but as the Scyths are more lightly armed, they assault their enemies more freely.[9] Since the Italians were not aware of this, they were outmanoeuvred and vanquished by the Scyths, so that even the emperor Baldwin himself was captured by them and led off in chains to the emperor of the Bulgarians, John. They say that after John killed Baldwin, his head served as a goblet for the barbarian, after it had been cleaned of all its contents and decorated all round

with ornament.[10] However, the Adrianopolitans did not immediately realize what had occurred; for if they had, they would have come out of the city and made the Italians' tents their booty. Those Italians who were left behind lit bright lights in their tents, making the citizens suspect that they were present, while they left in the middle of the night as refugees for the city of Constantine.[11]

When the inhabitants of Adrianople realized this early in the morning, they plundered the things that had been left behind in the tents. Then the emperor of the Bulgarians set out to become master of their city, in accordance with the promises that had been made by the Adrianopolitans, but they refused this. Angered by their deceit, the emperor of the Bulgarians resolved to besiege them.[12] But the Bulgarians are completely without ability in siegecraft, for they know neither how to set up siege engines nor can they devise any other means of making an assault. And so the emperor of the Bulgarians departed from there[13] and, since he had nothing to prevent him—for the Italians had been utterly ruined by him[14] and there was no one else to oppose him—he overran the whole of Macedonia.[15] He acquired a great deal of booty, enslaving the cities to a man, and completely levelling them. It was his intention that the Romans might never be able to effect a recovery of their cities. And so he razed to their very foundations Philippopolis, a very admirable city situated by the Hebros, and then all the other cities, Herakleia, Panion, Rhaidestos, Charioupolis, Traianoupolis, Makre, Klaudioupolis, Mosynopolis, Peritheorion and many others which it is not necessary to enumerate.[16] He took the people from there and settled them by the banks of the Ister,[17] giving the settlements the names of their own enslaved towns and cities. He did this, he said, in revenge for the evils which the emperor Basil had worked against the Bulgarians and he said that since that man was called 'Bulgarslayer', he named himself 'Romanslayer'.[18]

He went as far as Thessalonike itself and died there, having succumbed to the sickness of pleurisy, but some said that his death was caused by divine wrath; for it seemed to him that an armed man appeared before him in his sleep and struck his side with a spear.[19] It was certainly true that never had so many evils befallen the Roman empire as those brought by him, so that even an epithet was applied to him which took its name from a dog; he was called 'Skyloioannes'[20] by all. For, since he had won over the Scythian race and was associated with them by kinship[21] and partook of their habits which were bestial by nature, he delighted in the murder of Romans.

When he died, his sister's son, Boril[22] by name, took to wife his Scythian aunt and became master of the realm of the Bulgarians. Someone secretly abducted Asan's son John, who was not yet of age,[23] and said that he had

gone to the Scythns. So much concerning the affairs of the Bulgarians. My account will relate what happened after this at the appropriate time.

§13 *Akrop. continues from §12 his account of John, ruler of the Bulgarians. The events described here date to 1205–7, from the battle at Adrianople (April 1205) to John's attack on, and death at, Thessalonike (autumn 1207). In his account Akrop. shows knowledge of a number of details (see §13.6–10), corroborated by other accounts, although his ascription to the Bulgarians of a lack of knowledge of siege warfare is not borne out by events (§13.13). See the Introduction, 90–1. In addition to Chon. and Vill., other contemporary sources for the events of 1205–7 are Henry's letter to the pope (1205) (PL 217.292–4), to archbishops, barons, knights (15 June 1205) (ed. Pokorny, 199–202), and to his brother Godfrey, from Adrianople (September 1206) (TTh II, 37–42). See also Prinzing,* Die Bedeutung, *48–63.*

[1] Robert of Clari (§65) reveals that John approached the crusaders before their conquest of the city, promising them aid, if they would crown him. They refused. 'He paid them very dearly for this later.' For John's coronation, see §12.2.

[2] The Latins had control of the 'land of Macedonia' by the autumn of 1205. Akrop. is referring to the theme of Macedonia, which encompassed classical and modern Thrace, with its centres at Adrianople, Philippopolis, Traianoupolis and Mosynopolis. See Koledarov, 'Traditions of antiquity and the middle ages in the regional nomenclature in the modern map of the Balkans', 148–9; Lemerle, *Philippes*, 123. See also §13.15.

[3] Akrop. most often refers to Adrianople as the 'city of Hadrian'. I have retained this form of the name in the translation.

[4] John had 'already subdued' Philippopolis in November 1204 (Vill. §311, §345–6) before the battle at Adrianople (14 April 1205) but also later, in June 1205. See at §13.12.

[5] The inhabitants of Adrianople (modern Edirne) had at first accepted the Latins but a revolt broke out in February 1205. See Vill. §273, §336; Chon. 614.83–615.22; letter of Henry (June 1205), ed. Pokorny, 200.16–19; Ernoul, 379–81.

[6] The doge himself, Enrico Dandolo, and not his representative in Constantinople, was present at the battle: Vill. §351; Chon. 615.1–3.

[7] The Latins attributed the uprising of the Greeks and their alliance with John to their innate disloyalty. See Vill. §333; letter of Henry to the pope: PL 217, col. 292D; letter of Henry (June 1205), ed. Pokorny, 200.16. Chon. (612.46–613.67) reports that the Greeks and John had been rebuffed when they had offered their services to the Latins. Therefore, they were bound together by the desire 'to do what evil they could to the Latins'.

[8] Chon.'s account (613.81–2) makes it clear that John wanted to 'escape the notice of the Latins'. See §13.13 for Akrop.'s characterization of the Bulgarians as fighters.

[9] For John's use of the lightly armed, sheepskin-clad Cumans against the Latins at the battle of Adrianople in April 1205, see Vill. §355–6; Robert of Clari, §112; Ernoul, 380–4; Chon. 615–16. On Akrop.'s use of 'Scyths' to refer to Cumans, see the Introduction, 51 and n. 313.

[10] Baldwin was in captivity at Trnovo for over one year before he died. The letter of Henry, dated 15 June 1205, refers to Baldwin as '*sanus . . . et vivus*' (ed. Pokorny, 201.43–6), while in his letter of September 1206 to his brother Godfrey, Henry reports that he had received confirmation of Baldwin's death: TTh II, 41; also Chon. 642.74–7. The sources vary on the circumstances of his death: Vill. §439 and n. 2; Aubry, 885.25–42; Chon. 642.86–95. See Wolff, 'Baldwin of Flanders and Hainaut', 281–322.

Only Akrop. mentions Baldwin's skull and its reuse as a goblet. In doing so he draws a parallel with khan Krum's (803–14) use of the emperor Nikephoros I's skull in 811: Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 491.17–22 (A.M. 6303). Constantine Akropolites perhaps alludes to this parallel when he says that John was called Krum by the Greeks because of his wickedness: Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα*, I, 211.8–10. Cf. Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 84.

[11] Chon.'s account (617.67–70) confirms this detail and adds that it was doge Dandolo's suggestion.

[12] Akrop. has misplaced this event in time. After the battle of Adrianople John went west to Thessalonike and Serres: Vill. §389, §392–4; Henry's letter to Godfrey, September 1206: TTh II, 39–40. It was then that he destroyed Philippopolis (Vill. §399, §401: June 1205). He set out to conquer Adrianople and Didymoteichon in the spring of 1206, 'deeming these cities the prize of the whole war': Chon. 631.17–633.56; Vill. §§423–32.

[13] John made three unsuccessful attempts to take Adrianople by siege in August 1206–April 1207: Vill. §442, §461, §472–5; letter of Henry from Adrianople (September 1206): TTh II, 42; Chon. 645.89–646.4. Akrop.'s ascription to the Bulgarians of a lack of knowledge of, and inability in, siege war is not supported by contemporary evidence. John's failure to take Adrianople in 1206 attests rather to the strength of its fortifications. Skout. (459.16–18) gives the more probable explanation for John's sudden departures from towns he besieged: his lack of manpower. John depended on the Cumans, as Vill. shows (§389, §473–4); if they departed to return to their homelands, because of the heat or for another reason, John was forced to lift the siege. See the Introduction, 90–1.

[14] The text should read *αὐτῷ* instead of *αὐτοῦ* (Heis. 23.2).

[15] On 'Macedonia' see §13.2. John overran this area from April 1205, after the battle at Adrianople, until his death.

[16] Akrop. enumerates the towns from east, from the sea of Marmara (Herakleia, Panion, Rhaidestos), to west on the Aegean coast (Traianoupolis, Makre, Peritheorion). Charioupolis (modern Hayrabolu) is inland, to the northwest of Rhaidestos. See Soustal, *Thrakien*, 399–404 (Philippopolis), 342–3 (Makre), 309 (Klaudioupolis), 369–70 (Mosynopolis), 394–5 (Peritheorion). Klaudioupolis has not been identified but from its position in the list of places it appears to be near Koumoutzena (modern Komotini): Soustal, *Thrakien*, 309. Skout. (459.25–6) adds to this list Porou, homonymous with the lake south of Peritheorion: Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 43, 99 n. 3. Not all the towns Akrop. lists were completely razed to the ground. At least Makre, Mosynopolis, and Philippopolis survived and prospered. See Akrop. §24 (Mosynopolis, Makre) and the letter of Henry (1206): TTh II, 39–40 (Philippopolis). See, on this, Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 105–6, 118, 158–9. However, Traianoupolis never recovered, while Peritheorion had to be rebuilt by Andronikos III in 1341: Kant. I, 542.10–15; Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 100, 119–20. For a description of the destruction, see the letter of Henry: TTh II, 40; Vill. §416–19.

[17] See Vill. §394, §491, §416; letter of Henry (September 1206): TTh II, 40: *in Blakiam transmisit*. For the Ister (Danube) river, see §11.

[18] Only Akrop. reports that Kalojan adopted the name 'Romanslayer' in reaction to Basil II's epithet 'Bulgarslayer'. If the latter was first attributed to Basil after the formation of the 'Second Bulgarian Empire' in the late twelfth–early thirteenth century (see §11.5), then Kalojan was reacting to the contemporary propagation of Basil's image as 'Bulgarslayer'.

[19] John laid siege to Thessalonike in the autumn of 1207. The city was saved by his sudden death. Akrop. alone attributes John's death to an illness, pleurisy, but he alludes to the contemporary story (Robert of Clari, §116; Aubry, 886.28–9) ascribing his death to St Demetrios, the patron saint of the city, when he says, 'some said that his death was caused by divine wrath; for . . . an armed man . . .'. The story of the deliverance of Thessalonike by St Demetrios is found in a fuller version in two late thirteenth–early fourteenth century encomia for the saint by John Staurakios (ed. I. Iberites, *Μακεδονικά* 1 (1940), 369–72), and Constantine Akropolites (ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα*, I, 211–13). The story is especially significant in view of the appropriation of this saint by John's brothers, Peter and Asan, who built a church of St Demetrios at Trnovo and had it spread about that the saint had left the Greeks and was supporting them in their uprising. See Chon. 371.13–28; Prinzing, 'Demetrios-Kirche und Aseniden-Aufstand', 257–65. The story concerning John's death therefore confirmed that St Demetrios was still with, or had returned to, the Greeks. On the cult of St Demetrios in

the thirteenth century, see Macrides, 'Subversion and loyalty in the cult of St Demetrios', 189–97. For Akrop.'s 'rationalism', see the Introduction, 54–5.

[20] The epithet 'Dog John' is found also in marginal notes to cod. Vat. gr. 163 which contains the histories of Chon. and Akrop. and was owned and annotated by John Chortasmenos (c. 1370–1439). See Heisenberg, 'Prolegomena', *Opera* I, vi; Dujčev, 'Appunti di storia Bizantino-Bulgara', 133–7. Constantine Akrop. (ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *'Ανάλεκτα*, I, 211.13–14) also alludes to the epithet in his encomium for St Demetrios.

[21] See §13.22.

[22] Boril (1207–18) is identified as John's nephew by Robert of Clari (§116) and Henry of Valenciennes (§506) but only Akrop. mentions his marriage with John's Cuman wife. See Zlatarski (*Istoriia*, III, 259–61), for the view that John's death was brought about by the Cuman contingent in his army, with the aid of John's Cuman wife. See also Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 82–7. Boril's seizure of power and appropriation of the imperial title and insignia is remarked upon by Henry in his letter of 1212: ed. Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 411.14–18, 420. See, too, Aubry, 886.32–3: 'There are three who call themselves emperor, Henry, Boril, and the third at Nicaea, Laskaris.' For the coins of tsar Boril, see Mushmov, *Monetitie*, 158–9. For Boril, Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 69–77; see §20.

[23] Asan's son, John II Asan (1218–41), mentioned above at §12, was in his early teens at the time of Boril's takeover. See Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 85; Dujčev, 'Prinosi', 148. For John II Asan, see below §20.

14. Michael, whom the narrative has already mentioned as ruling over Epiros and a part of the land of the Romans,[1] had three brothers: Constantine, Theodore and Manuel.[2] Of these, Theodore was with the emperor of the Romans, Theodore Laskaris, serving him[3] as were the rest of the Romans. For this reason, Michael appealed to the emperor Theodore to send him [his brother] to him because he did not yet have a child of age or even a legitimate son—for Michael,[4] about whom we shall speak later, was born to him of a concubine[5]—and he feared an untimely death; he knew his other brothers to be unsuited to rule. This Theodore, then, the emperor sent to his brother Michael, first binding him with oaths that he would keep his pledge of faithful service to him and to those who were to rule the Romans after him.[6]

And so he arrived and was with this brother Michael. Not long after, Michael was murdered by one of his servants at night, as he was lying in bed with his wife. Romaios was the murderer's name.[7] His brother Theodore then assumed his authority, along with his brothers Constantine and Manuel.[8] As Theodore was determined to rule, he greatly increased his realm. From the Italians he acquired not a little land and from the Bulgarians a great

deal. He made Thessaly[9] subject to him, Ochrid and Prilep,[10] Albanon[11] and Dyrrachion[12] itself. It was there that he nobly routed Peter[13] who had conquered Dyrrachion itself earlier when he arrived there; he had set out from Italy with a very great army and was making his way to the city of Constantine, having been proclaimed emperor by the pope. The said Peter was brother-in-law, through marriage to the sister of Baldwin, the first on the side of the Latins to rule as emperor, and of Henry[14] [who ruled] after him. Their sister was called Iolanda.[15] By her three children were born to Peter: Philip, Robert, and Baldwin. Of them, Robert and Baldwin ruled over the city of Constantine as emperors, since their eldest brother Philip yielded the imperial office to Robert. They also had sisters; one of whom was Maria, to whom the emperor Theodore was married.[16] As I said, the forementioned Theodore took his own army and opposed Peter, who had gone a short way beyond Dyrrachion and was in the rough terrain of Albanon. Then Theodore Komnenos' men prevailed over the Latin army by force so that all, to a man, were made captives with all their baggage, and the emperor Peter himself was put to the sword.[17] This was a great help to the Romans at the time.[18]

§14 *Akrop. continues the account of Michael of Epiros, introduced at §8. He explains how his brother Theodore came to rule and increased his territories. He gives an account of Theodore's capture (1217) of Peter of Courtenay, calling this a 'great help to the Romans'. He therefore considers Theodore to be still at this time on the side of the 'Nicaeans'. See, however, §21. For Akrop.'s 'Nicaean' viewpoint here, see the Introduction, 94–5.*

[1] The expression 'and a part of the land of the Romans' is not found in Skout. (460) or in Ephraim (7678). The phrase appears to contrast with 'ruled over Epiros' as if Epiros were not a part of the territory of the Roman empire. See the Introduction, 95–6. The 'part of the land of the Romans' which Michael ruled were places he had taken from the Latins: Dyrrachion, Corfu, Larissa, Salona (Amphissa): see Nicol, *Despotate*, 24–43; Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 110, 114, 134, n. 71. For Dyrrachion, taken in 1212, see Aubry, 886; letter of Bardanes, metropolitan of Corfu, ed. Loenertz, 'Lettre', 99, 112.256–63; the *Life* of Stephen Nemanja, ed. Hafner, 118–20. A letter (1222) of the patriarch Manuel Sarantenos shows that Michael controlled Larissa: Vasilievskij, 'Epirotica', 268; Ferjančić, *Tesalija*, 42. For Michael's control of Corfu, see Nicol, *Despotate*, 38–9.

[2] Manuel, Theodore and Constantine were Michael's half-brothers since Michael himself was the illegitimate son of the *sebastokrator* John Doukas: see §8. It is probably for this reason that Akrop. never refers to Michael with a surname, although he calls his brother, Theodore, 'Komnenos'. On the name see also §25; the Introduction, 41. For Manuel, see Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 43,

p. 90 and below §26, §38. For Constantine, see Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 44, p. 91 and below §38.

[3] See §14.6.

[4] For Michael II, see §39, §46, §49. In his agreement of 1210 with the Venetians, Michael refers to a son Constantine as his successor: TTh II, 120–3, here 123; Polemis, *Doukai*, 92, and n. 10. D. M. Nicol, 'The Greek and Latin Empires, 1204–1261', *The Cambridge Medieval History* IV (1966), 314, n. 1, suggests that Constantine and Michael are the same person. Michael I had three daughters as well: Polemis, *Doukai*, 92.

[5] Pitsakis ('*Ζητήματα κωλυμάτων γάμου*', 355–60) hypothesizes that 'concubine' is Akrop.'s way of describing the woman Michael later took to wife (see the text at §14.7: 'his wife'), marrying within the prohibited degrees. According to the *Life* of St Theodora of Arta, Michael was married twice; his second wife, a Melissene, was a first cousin of his first wife (PG 127.904 A, C). Thus his second marriage was within the prohibited degrees.

[6] The only other source that mentions Theodore Komnenos' service to Theodore Laskaris and his oath to him is a letter of George Bardanes, metropolitan of Corfu, to the patriarch Germanos of Nicaea, written years after the event, in 1226–7. Bardanes, writing as an apologist for Theodore Komnenos, claims that when Theodore Komnenos was with Laskaris, 'wresting fortresses from the enemy', the latter had not yet been crowned emperor: Loenertz, 'Lettre', 116. He therefore implies that Theodore left for Epiros before 1208, the date of Theodore Laskaris' coronation. However, Akrop. states that he joined Michael not long before the latter's death (i.e. 1213–early 1214: §14.7). See the Introduction, 42–3, on problems of dating. The date of his departure from Anatolia cannot, therefore, be resolved. Bardanes likewise denies that oaths bound Theodore Komnenos to the successors of Theodore Laskaris: Loenertz, 'Lettre', 116. The words Akrop. uses to describe Theodore's oath to the emperor Theodore I, 'that he would keep his pledge of faithful service to him' (*πίστιν δουλείας*), are the words which describe the bonds between an emperor and his *oikeios*: see Verpeaux, 'Les oikeioi', 89–99, esp. 91–6; Svoronos, 'Le serment de fidelité', 106–42, esp. 139–40; Ferluga, 'La ligesse dans l'empire byzantin', 97–123, esp. 122.

[7] Ephraim (7679–81) adds that Michael was in Bellegrada (Berat) at the time of his death. The *Life* of Stephen Nemanja confirms that the murderer was one of Michael's servants: ed. Hafner, 120. On the name 'Romaios' which is attested in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and indicates Latin origin, see Magdalino, 'Prosopography and Byzantine identity', 49–51. Michael died late in 1214 or early 1215 (before February): see Ferjančić, 'Srbija i vizantijski svet u prvoj polovini XIII veka (1204–1261)', 109–10. In a document dated

February 1215, Michael's brother Theodore is mentioned as the power: MM IV, 382–3. For Michael's 'wife', see §14.5.

[8] Manuel and Constantine were associated with Theodore although they played secondary roles, at least until 1230. See Skout. (460.30–1): 'with his brothers . . . subordinate to him'. On Manuel, see §25, §26, §38, §39. On Constantine, see §38, §39.

[9] Theodore's acquisitions in Thessaly, the area drained by the Peneios and Spercheios rivers, were considerable. They stretched from the southern boundary of Macedonia in the north, to Neopatras in the south. See the letters of John Apokaukos, ed. Vasilievskij, 'Epirotica', 243–8; Nicol, *Despotate*, 58–9; Ferjančić, *Tesalija*, 39–44.

[10] Ochrid (*Ἀχρίς*, *Ἀχρίδα*), ancient Lychnis, situated on a lake of the same name in Macedonia, and Prilapos (Prilep), to the northeast of Ochrid, were both under Bulgarian control when Theodore took them in 1216/17. The date of their conquest is based on the appointment of Demetrios Chomatenos to the archbishopric of Ochrid. For Prilep which changed hands repeatedly in the following years, see §25, §44, §46, §49, §59, §72; Nicol, *Despotate*, 49; Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 114.

[11] In the thirteenth century, Albanon was the name of the mountainous region between Dyrrachion and Ochrid on the Via Egnatia, and including Kroai to the north: Stadtmüller, 'Forschungen zur albanischen Frühgeschichte', 168–73; Ducellier, 'L'Arbanon et les Albanais au XI^{e} siècle', 353–68. Albanon would appear to have been Theodore's by this time (see also §25.13) but Prinzing argues that the region had already come under the control of Theodore's brother, Michael: Prinzing, 'Studien zur Provinz- und Zentralverwaltung', I, 103–4. For Albanon, see also §25.13, §49.30, §66.8, §67.4, §68.5.

[12] Dyrrachion (Durazzo), the ancient Epidamnos, on the Adriatic coast of modern Albania, had been conquered by Theodore's brother, Michael, in 1212: Bardanes (ed. Loenertz, 'Lettre', 494). An inscription on its walls, dating to 1225, attests to its importance for Theodore: Boeckh, *Corpus Inscriptionum* IV, 99.

[13] Peter of Courtenay, count of Nevers and Auxerre, grandson of Louis VI of France, and brother-in-law of the emperors Baldwin (1204–5) and Henry (1206–16) by marriage to their sister, Iolanda, was chosen to succeed to the throne after Henry's death. Pope Honorius III crowned Peter on 9 April 1217 (Pressutti, *Regesta*, no. 497, p. 86) in San Lorenzo, outside the walls of Rome (Richard of San Germano, 77), to avoid the possibility of conflict over claims to the western empire. For Akrop.'s use of the word to 'proclaim' (Heis. 25.15) for coronation, see the Introduction, 52 and n. 325. Peter attacked Dyrrachion on his way to Constantinople: TTh II, 193–5.

[14] For Henry, see §15.

[15] Iolanda travelled to Constantinople by sea as she was expecting the birth of the future Baldwin II: Ernoul, 392; below, §27. She ruled in Constantinople until her death in 1219 when her son Philip was summoned to rule: Dandolo, 285.31–4. When Philip declined, Robert became the next in line, in 1221: Ernoul, 393; Aubry, 906; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 151–7; Hendrickx, 'Les institutions', 142–3. For Robert, see also §18.

[16] For Maria, Theodore Laskaris' third wife, see §15, §18; Aubry, 906; Mouskes, 23009–12.

[17] Akrop. (and Skout. 461.23–4; Ephraim, 7714) are the only sources to claim that Peter of Courtenay was killed. The Latin sources say he died in prison: Mouskes, 23030–1; Richard of San Germano, 78; Ernoul, 392–3. See Nicol, *Despotate*, 51–2.

[18] The victory over Peter at Dyrrachion is praised in a letter of George Bardanes to the patriarch Germanos II: ed. Loenertz, 'Lettre', 112–13.

15. But my account returns to the emperor Theodore Laskaris. He had three daughters, as I said, by his wife Anna: Eirene, Maria and Eudokia.[1] Maria, the second of his daughters, he gave to the king of Hungary, in marriage for his son, when the former was passing through his land on his return from Jerusalem.[2] His first daughter, Eirene, he joined to Andronikos Palaiologos,[3] whom he also honoured as despot. Not long after, the despot Palaiologos died, some say from a sexual condition, and the emperor took as a son-in-law John Doukas whose surname was Vatatzes; he was from Didymoteichon and exercised the function of *protovestiarites*.[4] Since the empress Anna had already died some time ago, the emperor married a woman from Armenia. But when he became displeased with her, he sent her away to her native land of Cilicia[5] and took as wife the sister[6] of the man who ruled as emperor over the Italians who, as I said, was called Robert[7] and who succeeded his uncle Henry.

This Henry became the cause of many wars with the emperor Theodore,[8] and brought under his control many cities and lands of the Romans. For he was brave and impulsive with respect to battle, and saw that Roman affairs had been humbled, especially from the time when the emperor Theodore killed the sultan; it was then that the army of Franks which was attached to Theodore had been destroyed; he had relied on them even for warfare against their own people, and the emperor Henry also feared them. For many of them were renowned because of their race, but also for their innate courage. That is why, as some say, when Henry heard about the emperor's victory, he remarked, 'Laskaris was vanquished, not victorious.'[9] At any rate, so as not to extend greatly the account of the narrative, through this one example

I might give the entire picture. Henry pitched tent as far as Nymphaion itself,[10] as there was not a soul in his way, and from there he turned back, partly because he was sated by his conquests, partly because he wished to obtain a truce—for the Latin race does not have great endurance in battle[11]—and he came to an agreement with the emperor Theodore.[12] It was agreed that all of Kiminas[13]—for this is what the mountain is called which is near Achyraous—together with Achyraous[14] itself, would be controlled by the Franks, that Kalamos (Kalamos is a village where the theme of Neokastra begins)[15] would remain uninhabited, while everything from there and beyond would be controlled by the emperor Theodore. This consisted of Neokastra and Kelbianon,[16] Chliara and Pergamon[17] and the places adjacent to them, Magidia and Opsikia.[18] The territory starting from Lopadion and including Prousa and Nicaea[19] also belonged to the emperor Theodore. This is how matters were resolved for the emperor Theodore.

§15 *Theodore I's marriage negotiations for his daughters and himself, in 1213/14 and 1219, lead to an account of the Latin emperor Henry, first mentioned in §14, and to his wars with Theodore, in particular the campaign of 1211 which is related in detail in the letter of Henry to the west (13 January 1212): Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 395–431. For Henry's battles against the enemies of the Latin empire, see van Tricht, ' "La gloire de l'empire" ', 228–30. At the start of the campaign the Latins possessed only Pegai in Asia Minor: Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 415.101–2. The Latin army started at Pegai and made its way eastward to the Rhyndakos river where a day-long battle was fought on 15 October 1211. The Latins were victorious: Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 415–17. The conquests of Lentiana and Poimanenon, mentioned in §16, should be seen as part of this campaign: see §16.1. For the date of the agreement between Henry and Theodore, see §15.12.*

1 See also §6 for Theodore I's three daughters. Here Akrop. does not mention the marriage of Eudokia. For her, see §18, §22, §24, §47.

2 King Andrew II of Hungary, the son of Bela III, stopped at Nicaea on his return from the fifth crusade in 1217/18 and negotiated a marriage between his son Bela IV (1235–70) and Maria. See Theiner, *Vetera monumenta* I, no. 32, p 21.3–4 (*anno* 1219); Aubry, 905.37–40, 911.39–40. Also, Kosztolnyik, *Hungary in the thirteenth century*, 67–8, 86–7; Dabrowska, 'A Byzantine lady's daughters in Poland', 197–202.

3 Andronikos Palaiologos is not known from any other (independent) source but almost everything that is known about him from Akrop. has been disputed: his identity/name, the date of his marriage, the date of his death, the cause of his death. See Cheynet and Vannier, *Études prosopographiques*, no. 30, 172–4. Akrop. mentions Andronikos in two contexts: here as the

(first) husband of Eirene, who received the title of despot upon marriage to the emperor's eldest daughter, thus marking him out as Theodore I's heir, and at §16 where he is said to be one of three men released by the emperor Henry after the siege at Lentiana (1211: for the date see §16). The order in which these two events are mentioned does not signify that Andronikos was already married by the time of the siege at Lentiana. The marriage took place some years after, in 1216. The metropolitan of Ephesos, Nicholas Mesarites, married the couple at Nicaea, as the title to an unpublished Lenten sermon reveals. For the date of the marriage (February 1216), see Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen,' III, 59 and 58–61. The same title to the sermon, however, gives the name of the groom as Constantine Doukas Palaiologos. The discrepancy in the name has been attributed to a copyist's error by some, while others prefer the information given in the title to the sermon to Akrop.'s version. There is no way of resolving the question but Akrop.'s information cannot be discounted with the argument that he is inaccurate and contradicts himself on early events. The date of Andronikos' death is unknown. It was 'not long after' he was married to Eirene (sometime after 1216). The cause, 'a sexual condition', literally, 'an erotic condition', implies a sexually transmitted disease.

[4] The future emperor John Doukas Vatatzes (1221–54) is perhaps a son of Basil Vatatzes, *domestikos* of the east and *doux* of the Thrakesion theme under Isaac II. The family was originally from Thrace: Skyl. 441.56; Amantos, '*Η οἰκογένεια Βατάτζη*', 174–8; Langdon, 'Backgrounds to the rise of the Vatatzai', 179–87. According to Chon. 400.74–80, 446.64–70, Basil was of undistinguished birth but was raised to high office by virtue of his marriage to a cousin of the emperor Isaac II. See at §51 where John III's brother, Isaac Doukas, is mentioned. Akrop. refers to the emperor John III as Vatatzes only once, here. See §19. Skout. (462.3–4) claims that John was *protovestiarios*, in distinction to Akrop.'s '*protovestiarites*'. At Nicaea neither title was connected with the treasury (see Angold, *Exile*, 206). They were honorary titles whose recipients sometimes held military commands: Guilland, *Recherches* I, 216–36. It appears that John did not receive the title of despot upon marriage to Eirene. See §18.6. For Eirene Komnene, see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I/1, no. 119, pp 109–10, and below §23.

[5] The empress Anna's date of death is not known, only that she 'had already died some time ago', before Theodore I's marriage to a woman 'from Armenia' which is dated to late 1213. For the date, see van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 182–6; also the synodal letter of October 1213 to king Leo II of Armenia: Pavlov, 'Sinodal'naia gramota 1213 goda o brake grecheskago imperatora s docheriu armianskago kniazia', 164–6, and Mesarites' account of the marriage: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', III, 47.20–31. Skout. (462.5–6) identifies the woman as the daughter of king Leo, while Armenian sources identify her as Leo's niece,

Philippa: RHC, *Documents arméniens* I (Paris, 1869), 627, 640, 510 and n. 1. See Niketas Chon.'s letter to his uncle Basil Kamateros who was sent by Theodore I to Armenia to fetch the bride: *Orationes*, 216–17. The reason for Theodore I's rejection of his wife has been debated: Pavlov (see above) and Heisenberg, 'Zu den armenisch-byzantinischen Beziehungen am Anfang des 13. Jahrhunderts', 3–20. See van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 181–6, for a discussion of the woman's identity (a younger daughter of Rupen who gave his brother Leo his daughter to raise when he became a monk) and for the opinion that Akrop.'s 'he became displeased with her' camouflages a political reason for the rejection. On Cilicia (Lesser Armenia), see der Nersessian, 'The kingdom of Cilician Armenia', 630–59. Theodore had a son by this wife who was eight at the time of the emperor's death in 1221, and was therefore born in 1214. For this son, see §18.7.

[6] Maria of Courtenay, sister of Robert (1221–8), was married to Theodore I in 1219, before Robert (§15.7) had ascended the throne. Theodore and Maria had no children. See Greg. I, 21.20–5. While Robert was abroad and just before his death, Maria acted as regent in Constantinople. In a document of 1228 by which she renews the privileges given to the Pisans by her brother, she is called *baiula imperii Constantinopolitani*: A. Schaube, 'Eine bisher unbekannte Regentin des lateinischen Kaiserreiches', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 8 (1887), 587–94; Hendrickx, *Regestes*, no. 163, p. 111. Mouskes, 23025–33; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 157. On Maria see also §18.

[7] Akrop. never calls Robert simply 'emperor' but always qualifies his title and authority, here referring to him as 'emperor over the Italians' and in §18 as 'emperor of Constantinople'. On this see the Introduction, 41, 90.

[8] For Henry (1206–16), first mentioned at §14, see also §16–17. Akrop. discusses only one campaign under Henry in the reign of Theodore I, that of the autumn–winter 1211–12: see commentary at §16. For an earlier battle at Nikomedeia in 1207, see Vill. §455, §480, §485–7.

[9] This is a reference to Theodore I's battle with Kaykhusraw in 1211 (§9, §10). Although Theodore won the battle, he lost many men, according to Akrop., including 'nearly all' of the 800 Latins who were in his army (see §9.9, §10). The emperor Henry's reported words here are consistent with Akrop.'s account of the battle (see §10.7) but not with Henry's own account in his letter of 1212 informing those in the west of events. In that letter he claims that Laskaris won a great victory with the help of the Latins who fought in his army in spite of the papal excommunication. See Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 414.86–90.

[10] Henry's letter, written from Pergamon, does not mention Nymphaion. However, he must have advanced to the Thrakesion theme before turning north to Pergamon. There is evidence that his army was expected there: the *sebastokrator* George had orders from the emperor Theodore, his brother, to

move people from that theme to safer places (MM IV, 35; see also §16.2). This is an early reference to Nymphaion by Akrop. who mentions it again later as a place of winter residence for the emperor John III (§41.2). Henry's encampment at Nymphaion, in the autumn–winter campaign of 1211, suggests that it already possessed some significance as a place of imperial residence from the time of Theodore I's reign: see §41.2 and Hendy, *Studies*, 445; idem, *Catalogue* IV/2, 470–2. See the Introduction, 87–8.

[11] For this judgement, see the Introduction, 89, 91.

[12] The agreement between Henry and Theodore I has been dated to 1214 (Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 145–6; Hendrickx, *Regestes*, no. 129) because of a reference to peace in Mesarites' account of the negotiations with cardinal Pelagius (see §17): *κατάστασιν ἐκκλησιῶν ἱμειρόμενοι ἀλλὰ καὶ κοσμικὴν γαληνότητα* (Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 19.8–12). However, the agreement could date to sometime after Henry's letter of January 1212. See Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1684, p. 6. This settlement remained in force until 1224: see §22.

[13] Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 159.

[14] For the fortress of Achyraous overlooking a tributary of the Makestos river, see Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 93–4, 133; Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 156; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications*, 146; Foss, 'The defenses of Asia Minor', 161–6. It had great strategic importance, commanding the route along the river valley, the main road from the Propontis and the Mysian plain. A reference to the Latin occupation of Achyraous is made by the patriarch Germanos (1223–40) who spent some time there in the monastery of St George Paneumorphos before he became patriarch. See Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465C; Lagopates, *Γερμανός ὁ Β Πατριάρχης*, 216.10–19.

[15] The village of Kalamos (modern Gelembe) is situated on the upper Kaikos to the south of Achyraous: Robert, *Villes d'Asie Mineure*, 66–9; see also §87.1. Kalamos was, according to Akrop., the northernmost boundary of the Neokastra theme. The fact that Akrop. mentions Neokastra separately from Chliara and Pergamon shows that the theme of Neokastra was not identical with those places, as Ahrweiler ('Smyrne', 134–5) argues. Atramytion, Chliara and Pergamon are also listed as a separate *provincia*, before Neokastra, in the *Partitio* (ed. Carile, 218.20–1). Chon.'s (50.35–54) description of the Neokastra, built to protect the 'Asian cities', Chliara, Pergamon and Atramytion, indicates that Neokastra was to the east of Chliara, itself the easternmost city in the group. The theme, the chief unit of provincial administration, seems to have maintained its military and administrative character in the thirteenth century. The Neokastra theme, created by Manuel I, supplied an army also in the thirteenth century. See §60.

[16] Kelbianon is situated in the upper Kaistros valley: see Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 105, 130; also Kinn. (39.9–14) and Pach. (III, 237.15–16). At §7 above Kelbianon and Neokastra are said to have come into Theodore I's control after his defeat of Sabbas and Morotheodoros. In describing the emperor Theodore's territories here, Akrop. gives the northeast and southeast limits first, that is, Neokastra and Kelbianon. He then goes on to mention places in the Kaikos river valley: Chliara and Pergamon.

[17] For the identification of Chliara, a fortress in the Kaikos valley, with modern Tarhala, see Foss, 'Byzantine responses to Turkish attack', 162–6. For Pergamon (modern Bergama), see Foss, 'The defenses of Asia Minor', 166–71. Chliara is mentioned together with Pergamon also by Pach. III, 259.15–18.

[18] Magidia is probably to be identified with Pach.'s Magedon (I, 291.3, 292 n. 2; II, 405.1, 593.3), in the area between Achyraous and Kalamos, near Saittai. Opsikia cannot be a reference to the region of the Opsikion theme, as this lies too far to the north to have been included in the territories of Theodore by the terms of the treaty. Ramsay (*Historical geography*, 123) identifies Opsikia with Koula, the fortress mentioned by Pach. (IV, 479.8) to the south of Magidia, near Maionia; see also Pach. IV, 478 n. 42. On both places see Foss, 'Late Byzantine fortifications in Lydia', 302–3, 304–5.

[19] Lopadion on Lake Artynia (see §7) was abandoned by the Latins in 1205, when they were summoned to the defence of Adrianople: Vill. §341. Prousa (modern Bursa) and Nicaea (modern Iznik) were the first towns to come under Theodore I. See §6.

16. The said Henry, even though a Frank by birth, behaved graciously to the Romans who were natives of the city of Constantine, and ranked many of them among his magnates, others among his soldiers, while the common populace he treated as his own people. When he conquered the Roman towns of Lentiana and Poimanenon[1] and found warlike men who displayed acts of a noble soul, he welcomed them as a godsend. For in the town of Lentiana, it was not only the lack of water parching those who guarded it; in addition, hunger forced them to eat the leather from their shields and saddles, and, besides, when a wall of no small dimension collapsed before the siege engines, they guarded it for 40 days by the aid of a great fire, taking turns to stoke the flames with wood. When the town was taken, not one of these men was released, except the emperor's brother[2] and Dermokaites,[3] who was the appointed leader of the army, and Andronikos Palaiologos whom, as the account already mentioned, the emperor took as a husband for his daughter Eirene.[4] All the rest Henry assembled and drew up into companies, granting them their kinsmen as leaders. Ordering George Theophilopoulos[5] in command of them all, he entrusted to them the defence of the eastern parts.

§16 *Akrop. continues his discussion of Henry begun in §15. Here, and in §17, Akrop. gives evidence of Henry's good treatment of the Romans in his empire. The conquests of Lentiana and Poimanenon are mentioned as examples. Akrop. is the only source for these conquests which, although mentioned* after *the main discussion of the campaign of 1211 (§15), should be seen as part of that campaign. Akrop. has separated this incident from his main narrative on that campaign in order to underline the courageous character of the 'Romans' and Henry's policy towards them. Consequently, these conquests should not be dated to a time* after *the agreement reached by Henry and Theodore, as Hendrickx does (*Regestes, *no. 130, p. 91: anno 1215).*

*Latin and Greek sources attest to Henry's good treatment of, and popularity with, the Greeks: Henry of Valenciennes, §567, §663, §672, §683; Skout. 463.25–7=*Additamenta, *no. 13, 280; see at §17.7; van Tricht, ' "La gloire de l'empire" ', 217–23. Henry is the subject of a sixteenth-century Greek song: Manousakas, 'Τὸ Ἑλληνικὸ δημοτικὸ τραγούδι', 3–52; also, Manousakas, 'Καὶ πάλι τὸ τραγούδι', 336–70.*

[1] Lentiana and Poimanenon had been in the Latins' control in 1205: §7; also §22.

[2] On the emperor Theodore's brothers, see §22. Here Akrop. may be referring to the *sebastokrator* George who, at the time of Henry's campaign, was in charge of the resettlement of people living in the Thrakesion theme to safer places. See §15.10. Skout. (464.7–8=*Additamenta*, no. 14, p. 280) calls the emperor's brother the leader of the army, and not Dermokaites, as does Akrop.

[3] This is perhaps the Michael Dermokaites mentioned in a document of 1216 as *pansebastos sebastos* and administrator of the *episkepsis* of Sampson. See MM IV, 294; Nicol, 'The Byzantine family of Dermokaites c. 940–1453', nos 4, 5, pp 3–4.

[4] On Andronikos Palaiologos, see §15.3.

[5] An unpublished lead seal of a 'Theophilopoulos' from the collection of George Zacos, auctioned at Spink (*Catalogue*, auction 127, London, 7 October 1998, no. 92), may belong to George. He is otherwise known only from this reference in Akrop., although members of the family are attested for the fourteenth century: *PLP*, fasc. 4, no. 7627.

17. When this Henry ruled the city of Constantine, the pope dispatched to the Queen of Cities a bishop (whom they also call a legate) by the name of Pelagius, who bore all the privileges of the pope; for he wore red-dyed shoes and had clothes of the same hue and his horse's saddle and reins were also dyed in this colour.[1] Being of a rather wild character and arrogant,[2] he wrought many terrible things upon the inhabitants of the city of

Constantine. His pretext was seemingly reasonable,[3] for he was compelling all to bow down in subordination to the Elder Rome. Therefore monks were confined, priests were bound, and every church was closed. In this situation, one could do one of two things: either acknowledge the pope as first bishop and commemorate him in holy services, or death was the penalty for the person who did not do this.[4] This made the inhabitants of the city of Constantine and, most of all, the chief men,[5] heavy of heart. They went to the emperor Henry and said,

> Although we are of another race and have another bishop
> we have subjected ourselves to your rule, so that
> you rule over our bodies, but certainly not our spirits and souls.
> It is of necessity that we fight for you in war but it is utterly
> impossible that we should give up our beliefs and practices.
> Either deliver us from the terrible things which have come upon
> us or release us as free men to go to our own kind.[6]

They said this and, since he did not want to be deprived of so many good people, against the will of the said legate, he opened the churches and released all those monks and priests who were confined in prison, and calmed the tempest which held the city of Constantine in its grip at that time.[7] Many of the monks came out of the city of Constantine and went to the emperor Theodore, and by his command monasteries were given over to them to dwell in. Priests also went to Nicaea; some were included among the patriarchal clergy, while others gladly became attached to the holy churches where they lived comfortably.[8] It was in this manner that these things were accomplished by the then reigning emperor of the city of Constantine, Henry.

§17 *Akrop. continues his discussion of Henry's behaviour towards his Greek subjects, here with the example of an ecclesiastical issue created by the mission of Pelagius to Constantinople in 1213–15. Sources for the events described here are Nicholas Mesarites' report on his meeting with Pelagius (Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 6–54), a letter of the patriarch Theodore Eirenikos to the Greeks under Latin control (A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Θεόδωρος Εἰρηνικός', BZ 10 (1901), 182–92), and a letter to Innocent III from the Greek clergy in Constantinople (PG 140.293–7). See van Tricht, ' "La gloire de l'empire" ', 223. For the date of Pelagius' stay in Constantinople, late 1213–14/15, see the letters of pope Innocent III, announcing his arrival, PL 216.901–4, and Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 62.*

[1] Pelagius, cardinal bishop of Albano, and legate to the Latin empire, was sent to Constantinople in late 1213 by pope Innocent III. See the pope's letters of introduction for Pelagius to the emperor of Constantinople and the

ecclesiastical hierarchy: PL 216.901–3. Nicholas Mesarites, sent by Theodore I to meet with Pelagius in Constantinople and Nicaea in 1214/15, gives a report of the discussions. Mesarites relates that Pelagius made a point of showing him his red shoes, at the start of the proceedings, claiming that the successors of St Peter were given the right to wear them by the emperor Constantine: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 22.15–32.

[2] 'Demented' (*τετυφωμένος*), according to Mesarites: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 23.11.

[3] Skout. (464.15–465.15) omits this sentence.

[4] Pelagius' harsh treatment of priests and monks is confirmed by Mesarites' account of the arrival of monks from the Propontis at Nicaea, 'relating in detail the threats, persecutions, exiles [they would suffer] if they did not proclaim the pope lord of all the clergy': Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 19.26–9. Also a letter of the patriarch Theodore Eirenikos to the Greeks in Constantinople and elsewhere under Latin control refers to Pelagius' demands that they subordinate themselves to the pope and to the Latin patriarch of Constantinople and commemorate them in the services. See Papadopoulos-Kerameus, '*Θεόδωρος Εἰρηνικός*', 189–90; PG 140.297CD. These demands had been made also earlier and were the subject of discussion in 1206. See Mesarites on these earlier discussions: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' I, 52–60. On the question of the primacy of the pope, see Nicol, 'The papal scandal', 141–68.

[5] One of these 'chief men' could be the '*megas doux* Philokales', mentioned by the patriarch Theodore Eirenikos, in his letter of 1214 to the Greeks of the Latin empire, as a source of his knowledge of Pelagius' demands on them. See Papadopoulos-Kerameus, '*Θεόδωρος Εἰρηνικός*', 189.26–8.

[6] Similar sentiments are expressed in the letter to Innocent III written by the Greek clergy in Constantinople: 'We consider sir Henry, our emperor, to be our master and under his shadow we live and labour... during the inferior part of our lives, the mortal and fleeting [part]': PG 140.296; Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant* I, 42. See the Introduction, 38, on Akrop.'s sources.

[7] Akrop. is the only source for Henry's behaviour at the time of Pelagius' visit to Constantinople but there is earlier evidence which shows his cooperative attitude towards Greek churchmen. Several years before Pelagius' mission Henry reinstated Greek monks in the Chortaitou monastery near Thessalonike from which they had been expelled by the Cistercians. See PL 216.594–5, 951–2; E. A. R. Brown, 'The Cistercians in the Latin empire of Constantinople and Greece, 1204–1276', *Traditio* 14 (1958), 63–120, here 80–1; Hendrickx, *Regestes*, nos 125, 127, p. 88, pp 89–90. His helpful behaviour in ecclesiastical matters is also mentioned in a letter of the Greek clergy of Constantinople to Innocent, asking for the election of a new patriarch, cited by Mesarites in his

Epitaphios for his brother: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' I, 63–6, here 63.13–14, 63.35.

[8] Skout. (465.13–14=*Additamenta*, no. 16, p. 280) adds that not a few of these refugees became archbishops.

18. But when he died,[1] his sister's son Robert[2] dealt with affairs rather feebly. It was this man's sister whom the emperor took to wife.[3] Not many years passed and, since the emperor of Constantinople, Robert, had not yet married, the emperor planned to effect something which is unlawful; he chose to make Robert his son-in-law by marriage to his daughter Eudokia. On this account there was strife between the emperor and Manuel, who was the patriarch at the time, for Manuel could not consent to such an illegal union.[4] But the emperor did not manage to carry out his intention. For he had not yet sent his daughter to Constantinople, but as he was making preparations, he departed life,[5] leaving his imperial office to his son-in-law, John Doukas,[6] for he did not have a male child who had reached manhood. The male child he had had by the empress Anna had already died, and he had one male child by the woman from Armenia who was eight years old when his father the emperor died. Since, then, he was without any male offspring of age,[7] his son-in-law by marriage to his daughter inherited his imperial office.

When he came to the end of his life, the emperor Theodore Laskaris was more than 45 years old but less than 50, having ruled as emperor for 18 of those years.[8] He was small in body but not excessively so, quite dark, and had a flowing beard forked at the end,[9] and eyes differing slightly in colour.[10] In battles he was fierce[11] but he was defeated by his temper and by sexual pleasures. Most liberal with gifts, he would give much gold to whomever he wished, so that they were rich in an instant.[12] He endured great hardship in the battles against the Italians and the Persians. This man, then, was a new beginning for Roman rule,[13] and it is altogether right for the Romans to owe him much gratitude. His body was laid to rest in the monastery of Hyakinthos,[14] where the emperor Alexios[15] and the empress Anna,[16] Theodore's wife, had also been buried.

§18 *Akrop. relates Theodore I's marriage plans for his daughter, Eudokia, with the Latin emperor of Constantinople, Robert. The negotiations for the marriage can be dated to some time between Robert's accession to the throne in March 1221 (see §18.2) and the emperor Theodore's death in November 1221 (§18.8). Akrop. includes a short obituary notice for Theodore, in which he also describes the emperor's appearance (§18.9, 10). Theodore I is the only emperor at Nicaea whom Akrop. did not know personally and he is also the only one whose appearance Akrop. describes. See the Introduction, 55–6, for Akrop.'s* Kaiserkritik.

[1] That Henry died suddenly in Thessalonike (in 1216) is known from Robert of Clari, §119. The cause of his death was attributed variously to poisoning and to murder by his wife: Ernoul, 391; Mouskes, 22981–6; Manousakas, '*Τὸ Ἑλληνικὸ δημοτικὸ τραγούδι*', 37–52; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 150–1.

[2] Akrop. simplifies when he states that Robert succeeded Henry. There was a gap of several years in which time Peter (§14) was crowned in Rome and captured on his way to Constantinople, and Iolanda, Henry's sister and Robert's mother, ruled (1217–19): §14.15; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 153–9. Akrop.'s characterization of Robert of Courtenay (1221–8) is supported by Aubry (910) who describes him as *quasi rudis et idiota*. For Robert's seals as emperor, see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I, no. 113, p. 103.

[3] On the marriage of Robert's sister, Maria, and Theodore Laskaris in 1219, see §15.7.

[4] Plans for this marriage were made soon after Robert's coronation in Constantinople (March 1221): Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 159. According to Mouskes (23117–52), Robert sent an embassy to Nicaea to negotiate peace and Theodore offered his daughter in marriage. This marriage was twice negotiated unsuccessfully, according to Baudoin d'Avesnes, 425–6; also §22.2. Only Akrop. and Skout. (465.22–6=*Additamenta*, no. 17, p. 280) refer to the objections of the patriarch Manuel Sarentenos/Karantenos (1217–22: §19). Robert, already Theodore's brother-in-law, could not also become his son-in-law. This was an 'illegal union' and constituted incest because it was within the third degree of kinship and would lead to a confusion of names. On the prohibition of marriages among in-laws see, e.g. Schminck, 'Der Traktat *Περὶ γάμων* des Johannes Pediasimos', 143–65, 168–71; also Laiou, *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XI^{e}–XIII^{e} siècles*, 55. For Eudokia's eventual marriage, see §24.20, §47.

[5] For Theodore's death in November 1221, see Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* I, 74; II, 187–8; J. Darrouzès, review of Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* II, in *REB* 36 (1978), 276; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 471.

[6] For John Doukas Vatatzes or John III (1221–54), see above §15. Although John was married to Eirene, Theodore's eldest daughter, after the death of her husband, the despot Andronikos Palaiologos, John appears never to have held the title of despot. This may be because Theodore had a son and heir at the time of their marriage: see §18.7. Theodore I was himself the first son-in-law in the history of the empire to succeed to the throne.

[7] According to Skout. (465.30–466.1=*Additamenta*, no. 18, p. 280), Theodore had two sons by Anna, Nicholas and John, both of whom died young. Nicholas is known from a letter addressed to him as 'son of the emperor' by the people of Constantinople in 1207, requesting that a synod be held to appoint a new patriarch: Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II, 33–4.

In a patriarchal tome of 1208, he is called emperor and Theodore's successor and heir, and provisions are made should he succeed to the throne while still a minor: Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 121–4, 143 and n. 72. Thus, he must have been made co-emperor between 1207 and 1208. Theodore's son by his Armenian wife, known from Akrop. and from Armenian sources, was born in 1214: see §15.5. Although modern historians give the son's name as Constantine, they do not refer to their source. See, e.g. W. H. Rüdt-Collenberg, *The Rupenides, Hethumides and Lusignans* (Paris, 1963), Table: The Rupenides, nos 30 and 30a; Gerasimov, 'Hyperpères de Jean III Vatatzès, à tête surfrappées', 113–17, esp. 116. Nothing more is heard of him. Theodore did not have any children by Mary of Courtenay: Greg. I, 24.3–6; Aubry, 906.35–6.

[8] Greg. I, 13.14–16, states that Theodore was 'about thirty years old' when he was proclaimed emperor. This would make Theodore 48 when he died, a figure in keeping with Akrop.'s calculations. However, an 18-year reign is correct only if one takes a start date for the reign in 1203. See the Introduction, 81–4.

[9] Images of Theodore on coins show him with a forked beard, as does a drawing in Mutinensis gr. 122. See Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, pls 30–1; Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts*, pl. 119 and 174–6, 179.

[10] ἑτερόφθαλμος, 'eyes differing . . . in colour': *Geoponica*, ed. H. Beckh (Leipzig, 1895), 16.2.1. See, also, B. Baldwin, 'Physical descriptions of Byzantine emperors', *B* 51 (1981), 8–21, here at 17.

[11] According to Pach. (I, 59.9–10), Theodore II Laskaris inherited his grandfather's fierceness in battle and his generosity.

[12] Skout. (463.3–24=*Additamenta*, no. 12, 279–80) tells a story which illustrates this statement. He does not, however, insert the anecdote into the description of the emperor's character and accomplishments, but relates it earlier in his narrative of Theodore's reign.

[13] Akrop. plays on the word ἀρχή, 'beginning' and 'rule'.

[14] On the monastery of Hyakinthos in Nicaea, see §10.8.

[15] For Alexios III, see §10.9.

[16] For her death, see §15.5.

19. As I said, after his death, John Doukas, his son-in-law, took hold of the sceptre[1] of Roman affairs, having been crowned by the patriarch Manuel, who succeeded Maximos. For, after the death of the patriarch Michael,[2] Theodore Eirenikos, also called Kopas[3] by the people, was established on the patriarchal throne. When he left life six years later,[4] the monk Maximos was elevated to the patriarchal throne. He paid court to the women's quarters and was in turn

courted by it; for it was nothing else which raised him to such an eminence. Living for six months after this, he died[5] and Manuel was elevated to the patriarchal throne; a philosopher, it seems, in deed, and so named by the people.[6]

§19 *Akrop. relates the accession of the emperor John III (1221: see §15.4) and patriarchal succession. For patriarchs in Akrop.'s account, see the Introduction, 47–9. The circumstances of John III's accession to the throne are not clear. There is no account of his proclamation or coronation (see Christophilopoulou, Ἐκλογή, Ἀναγόρευσις καὶ Στέψις, 176) and Akrop.'s report here of the accession is combined in an awkward way with an account of patriarchal succession. It is not until §22 that he resumes his narrative of the new reign.*

Theodore I Laskaris, the first son-in-law and despot in Byzantine history to have become emperor, does not appear to have conferred the title of despot on John Doukas, although Theodore had married John to his eldest daughter (see §15.4). Conspiracies at the very beginning of John's reign (§22, §23, §55.3) indicate his problematic accession, as does the emphasis on his 'just inheritance' of the throne, in Akrop.'s funeral oration for the emperor and in the fourteenth-century Life *of the same: Heis.*, Opera *II, 15.12–16;* Life, *ed. Heisenberg, 209.31–210.6.*

[1] John III's date of accession has now been revised to 15 December 1221: see J. Darrouzès, review of Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* II, in *REB* 36 (1978), 276. Corroboration of this date can be seen also in Akrop.'s statement about Theodore II's birth: 'He was as old as his father's reign was long, for his birth more or less coincided with his father's proclamation [as emperor]' (§52.24). Also supportive of the 1221 date is Blem.'s account of his own movements in Asia Minor: see Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 471. Akrop. calls John III 'John Doukas', as he appears on seals and coins, or simply 'the emperor John'. Cf. §15: 'Vatatzes'. See Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I, 107–8; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 467.

[2] The date established for Michael IV Autoreianos' death, 1214, has been revised to 1213, on the basis of a letter of Basil Pediadites to pope Innocent III. See Manaphes, '*Ἐπιστολὴ Βασιλείου Πεδιαδίτου*', 429–33. On Autoreianos, see §7.

[3] Theodore Eirenikos (1214–16) was ordained after 1204, having acted as *epi tou kanikleiou* in Constantinople in the reign of Alexios III: Chon. 492.51–493.62; M. Chon., ed. Lampros, II, no. 75, 121–2; ed. Kolovou, 101; Chon., *Orationes*, 206–8, 211–14; van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 175–6, 179. Before election to the patriarchal throne, he was *chartophylax* and *hypatos ton philosophon*: Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465AB. His nickname of Kopas is mentioned by Xanthopoulos without comment. For the only surviving document from his patriarchate, see Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1219, pp 24–6.

[4] Akrop. is in error about the length of Eirenikos' patriarchate which was one year and several months' duration and not six years. See Laurent, 'La chronologie', 133–4; Hendy, *Studies*, 444–5.

[5] Maximos II (June–December 1216), abbot of the monastery *ton Akoimeton*, was the emperor Theodore's confessor before he became patriarch. See Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 114–15, 124–5, 129–30. For the circumstances of his appointment see Kurtz, 'Tri sinodalnich gramoti metropolita Ephesskago Nikolaia Mesarita', 103–5. Both Akrop. and Xanthopoulos are critical of Maximos' abilities, indicating that he concerned himself with the women at court (*gynaikonitis*) and that he could not have been elected patriarch without their support. Xanthopoulos (PG 147.465B) adds that he was 'uneducated'. For Akrop.'s judgements on patriarchs, see the Introduction, 47–9.

[6] Manuel I Sarantenos or Karantenos (1217–22), was deacon and *maistor ton philosophon* in Constantinople before 1204. Manuel's name of 'philosopher' (Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465C: *ὁ λεγόμενος φιλόσοφος*) derives from this title. The expression Akrop. uses, 'in deed and so named', is a variation on the phrase *ὄνομα καὶ πράγμα*: §63.17. See Laurent, *Regestes*, pp 38–9, for the identification of Sarantenos with Karantenos, and Browning, 'The Patriarchal School at Constantinople', 198–200. For the acts of his patriarchate, see Laurent, *Regestes*, pp 28–39. Also on Manuel see Criscuolo, 'Un opuscolo inedito di Manuele Karanteno o Saranteno', 213–21.

20. Now my account turns again to Bulgarian affairs. The first emperor of the Bulgarians, Asan, had two sons, John and Alexander.[1] When the forementioned Boril ruled over the Bulgarians as emperor,[2] Asan's son John fled, going to the lands of the Russians. He stayed there a considerable time and, gathering about him certain of the Russian rabble,[3] he claimed his paternal inheritance, fought against Boril, overcame him, and gained control of not a little land. Boril withdrew inside Trnovo and was besieged, walled up, for seven years.[4] When those who were with him grew weary, they surrendered to John Asan. Boril was captured while fleeing and was blinded by John, and it was in this way that John gained control over all the territory of the Bulgarians. So much for what was happening among the Bulgarians.

§20 *The succession to the Bulgarian throne from the time of the death of Asan I is related.*

[1] For John Asan II (1218–41), son of Asan, see §12, §13, §25; Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 77–92; Iurukova and Penchev, *Bulgarski srednovekovii Pechati i moneti*, 78–84. Alexander is mentioned also by Aubry (927.5–7) and the *Synodikon* of Boril (ed. Popruzhenko, 87). See also below, §73.2.

[2] Boril's (1207–18) assumption of the title and insignia of royal power is commented on by Aubry (886.32–3) and the emperor Henry in his letter of 1212 to the west. In the latter Henry refers to Boril as one of his four enemies. See Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 411.15–18. For Boril, see also §13.

[3] Above (§13) Akrop. says that John Asan fled to the 'land of the Cumans' but here he refers to the '[land] of the Russians' and the 'Russian rabble', by which he means the Brodniki, a people of Russian stock who lived by the banks of the Danube and north of it (Ephraim, 8077–8) and took part in the 1185 uprising of the Vlachs and Bulgarians, according to Chon. (*Orationes*, 93.18–22). For this identification, see J. Shepard, 'Tzetzes' letters to Leo at Dristra', *ByzFosch* 6 (1971), 206 n. 16, 222–3 and n. 70.

[4] Akrop.'s account of the conflict between Boril and John Asan is repeated by Skout. (468.11–19) and Ephraim (8070–82). An inscription in the Church of the Forty Martyrs in Trnovo confirms John Asan's victory over Boril in 1218. See Jireček, *Geschichte der Bulgaren*, 251–2. For Trnovo, the capital of the 'Second Bulgarian Empire', see §11.11, §34, §36, §73, §84. Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung*, 136 n. 81, suggests a seven-month duration for the siege and not seven years; also Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 322–3, 323 n. 2.

21. But Theodore Komnenos,[1] whom the account mentioned a short time ago, was not willing to remain in his proper place, but appropriated the insignia of imperial office when he gained control of Thessalonike[2] and brought under him much of the land of the Roman empire that had been held by the Italians, and even that which had been conquered by the Bulgarians.[3] He donned the purple and put on red shoes, although the metropolitan of Thessalonike, Constantine Mesopotamites, opposed him most firmly in this matter. Because of this, Theodore subjected the man who upheld the canonical customs to great maltreatment and exile.[4] But the archbishop of Bulgaria, Demetrios, crowned him with the imperial diadem since, as he said, he [Demetrios] was independent[5] and was not obliged to give account of his actions to anyone, and for this reason had the authority to anoint[6] emperors—whomever, wherever, and whenever he wished.

When Theodore was proclaimed[7] emperor, he dealt with affairs in an imperial manner: he appointed despots and *sebastokratores*, *megaloi domestikoi*, *protovestiarioi*, and all the rest of the imperial hierarchy. But, being naturally unsuited to the institutions of the imperial office, he handled matters in a Bulgarian or, rather, barbarian fashion for he did not understand hierarchy or protocol or the many ancient customs which have been established in the palaces.[8]

This man [Theodore] opposed the emperor John to no small degree. For, although the emperor thought Theodore worthy to share the imperial office

in second place, and to be in control of his own land, and be in no other way subject to him,[9] he stubbornly withstood.

§21 *Akrop. relates the conquest of Thessalonike by Theodore Komnenos Doukas and his assumption of imperial status. The date of this conquest, 1224, is secure: see §21.2. His proclamation and coronation followed at some interval: see §21.2, 5. The anointing of Theodore by Demetrios Chomatenos became a major issue between Nicaea and Epiros and has led to a debate about the origins of imperial unction. See §21.5.*

[1] For Theodore Komnenos Doukas whom Akrop. always calls Komnenos or Angelos see §14 and the Introduction, 41.

[2] Late in 1224: Richard of San Germano, 119–20 (between October and December 1224); Longnon, 'La reprise de Salonique par les Grecs en 1224', 141–6; Sinogowitz, 'Zur Eroberung Thessalonikes im Herbst 1224', 28. Coins depicting Theodore and St Demetrios holding a walled town with three towers date from his conquest of the city. See Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 267–73, pls 37.3, 7; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 622–4. Akrop. connects Theodore's appropriation of the symbols of imperial power with his conquests, and especially that of Thessalonike. However, Theodore was not known as emperor until late 1225 or 1226. For this later date see Stavridou-Zaphraka, '*Συμβολὴ στὸ ζήτημα τῆς ἀναγόρευσις τοῦ Θεοδώρου Δούκα*', 39–62, esp. 45–62. The later date is also supported by a scribal note by an *anagnostes* from the theme of Ioannina, dated 13 February 1225 and referring to Theodore Doukas without imperial title: *αὐθεντεύοντος δὲ τοῦ Θεοδώρου τοῦ Δούκα*. For this see Chrysos, '*Ἱστορικὰ στοιχεῖα γιὰ τὴν Ἤπειρο σὲ σημείωμα τοῦ κώδικα* Cromwell 11', 58–65. Akrop. himself, however, indicates that Theodore was known as emperor by 1225: §24.17, 18.

[3] His attempts to conquer Thessalonike began in 1220, by which time he had reduced the area of Latin control to the city itself, having taken Neopatras, Platamon, and Serres. From the Bulgarians Theodore took Ochrid, Prilep, Debre, Prosek, Kastoria, Grevena, and Berroia by 1220. The letters of John Apokaukos, metropolitan of Naupaktos, congratulating Theodore, are a record of his victories: see Vasilievsky, 'Epirotica', 243–8, 276.

[4] Mesopotamites was *epi tou kanikleiou* and in charge of public affairs under Isaac II and Alexios III. After he was ordained in Alexios III's reign, he continued to hold a secular position at court. His tenure of the metropolitan see was short-lived, ending in disgrace the first time (late 1196–spring 1197), in the Latin conquest the second time (1198?–1204), and in his abdication or dethronement the third time (1224–?). See Chon. 484–92; Laurent, 'La succession épiscopale de la métropole de Thessalonique dans

la première moitié du XIII^{e} siècle', 284–92; Spieser, 'Les inscriptions de Thessalonique', 166, no. 17. For a seal of Mesopotamites as metropolitan, see Laurent, *Corpus des sceaux* V/1, no. 464, pp 338–9.

Mesopotamites' opposition, as Akrop. describes it, was to Theodore's proclamation as emperor and not (yet) to his coronation. Opposition was expressed at the time of Theodore's proclamation and before his coronation also by the synod of bishops at Nicaea who sent a letter to 'the self-proclaimed emperor in Thessalonike, to divest himself of this purple robe'. See Blem., *Autobiographia*, §23; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 19, 56–7. A letter of Niketas Chon. to Mesopotamites, written at Nicaea sometime after 1206, indicates that Mesopotamites was associated with the 'empire of Nicaea' after 1204, for Chon. speaks of his return 'from western parts' to 'his paternal land' (*Orationes*, 204–6; van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 173–5). Therefore, Mesopotamites' opposition to Theodore Komnenos Doukas' elevation to the imperial position may have been related to his loyalties to Nicaea. Skout. (468.27–8=*Additamenta*, no. 21, p. 282) claims that Mesopotamites was forced to take the tonsure but a letter of George Bardanes, metropolitan of Corfu, denies that he was driven from his see or sent into exile. According to him, on the contrary, Mesopotamites chose to leave, having refused to give the guarantee of his loyalty to Theodore Komnenos Doukas who required this of him because of his past. See Loenertz, 'Lettre', 111.239–112.270.

[5] Demetrios Chomatenos (Skout., 468.28–30, adds his surname) was appointed to the see of Ochrid upon Theodore's conquest of the city in 1216/17: see *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, cols 1874–5. After Basil II's conquest of Bulgaria, Ochrid, which had been the seat of the Bulgarian patriarchate under Samuel, was recognized as an archbishopric while its head was called 'archbishop of all Bulgaria'. See Skyl. 358.14. Chomatenos crowned Theodore some years after his proclamation, and probably in 1227. See Bee-Sepherle, '*Ὁ χρόνος στέψεως τοῦ Θεοδώρου Δούκα*', 272–9.

Chomatenos identified his see with Justiniana Prima which was autocephalous (ed. Prinzing, 376–7). Skout. (468.29) likewise uses the word 'autocephalous' archbishop to describe Chomatenos. Akrop. represents Demetrios as saying he was *αὐτόνομος* ('independent') (ed. Prinzing, 370–8; Prinzing, 'Die Antigraphe des Patriarchen Germanos II', 21–64). He conveys the spirit of Chomatenos' defence rather than his actual wording. See the Introduction, 38, on Akrop.'s sources. For Chomatenos' arguments, see Macrides, 'Bad historian or good lawyer? Demetrios Chomatenos and Novel 131', 187–96.

[6] Akrop. mentions unction of an emperor at coronation only once, here, in connection with Demetrios Chomatenos' assertion of his authority to anoint emperors. This reference is a reflection of the importance which the coronation of Theodore Komnenos Doukas assumed for contemporaries. It

was the subject of an exchange of letters between the patriarch Germanos and Chomatenos. For Akrop.'s sources, see the Introduction, 38. The question of the date of introduction of anointing to the coronation ritual is much debated and remains unresolved. For the differing views on the subject, see Macrides, 'Bad historian or good lawyer? Demetrios Chomatenos and Novel 131', 187–96 and 'Subversion and loyalty in the cult of St Demetrios', 193–7. Cf. Angold, *Church and society*, 542–7, esp. 544.

[7] As above (§7.6) when referring to Theodore I Laskaris, Akrop. uses '*ἀναγορευθείς*', 'proclaimed' (Heis. p. 34.5) after he has mentioned the coronation, implying that he is going back in time to the proclamation. In Theodore Komnenos Doukas' case, as in Theodore Laskaris', the proclamation and coronation were separated by some years. However, Akrop. shows no knowledge of a time lapse between the two acts in either Theodore I's or Theodore Komnenos Doukas' case. Therefore, when he refers here to the appointments Theodore made, he may be referring to the time of the proclamation (1224/25: §21.2) rather than that of the coronation (1227: §21).

[8] Akrop. characterizes Theodore as 'handling matters in a Bulgarian or, rather, barbarian fashion'. He may be making a snide reference to his coronation by the 'archbishop of Bulgaria', who is described by the patriarch Manuel as an 'outsider' (*ἄνθρωπος ὢν ἐξωτερικὸς*), 'unfamiliar with the ecclesiastical formation and education': Vasilievsky, 'Epirotica', 269.11–13. Akrop. uses the words *τάξις* and *κατάστασις* (Heis. 34.10–11) for 'hierarchy' and 'protocol', terms frequently used in the context of court ceremony and found in treatises such as Philotheos' *Kletorologion* (Oikonomides, *Les Listes de préséance*, 22–4, 65 n. 1, 81.1, 135.20). For these terms see Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 237–8. Akrop. mentions here Theodore's appointments to the top four positions in the hierarchy: Angold, *Exile*, 64. From the appointments Theodore made, it is clear that he departed from 'protocol' and 'the ancient customs' by, for example, bestowing the title of despot on his brothers, Constantine and Manuel: see §26, §38, §39; Vasilievsky, 'Epirotica', 298.8–10. On this see Magdalino, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese', 320–1. For *sebastokrator* and *protovestiarios*, see Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 257.6–7; Bee-Sepherle, no. 18, p. 78.15. There is no evidence for the appointment of *megaloi domestikoi*. On these appointments, see Prinzing, 'Studien' II, 102 and n. 272.

[9] Akrop. (followed by Skout. 469.6–9; Ephraim, 7963–6) is the only source for the emperor John's offer to Theodore.

22. Now, the emperor John had just taken hold of the sceptre and had seen that the Roman realm was in straitened circumstances. As he was not content

to rule over a mere fraction [of an empire], when two years had passed, he engaged the Italians in battle. A battle-worthy Latin army was assembled, at the front of which fought the brothers of the emperor Theodore, the *sebastokratores* Alexios and Isaac.[1] For, at the time when their brother, the emperor, died, they had planned to run away to Constantinople, taking with them his daughter Eudokia. But they failed in their object, and left as fugitives.[2] When battle was joined in the area of Poimanenon where stands the church of Michael, the Archgeneral of the Heavenly Forces,[3] the emperor won a victory by storm; although at first most of the Romans were nearly defeated, the emperor himself with a very few men achieved a total victory. For he took hold of a spear and struck the enemy, displaying in that war a brave spirit that had not gone unnoticed by people before that time.

This victory contributed to the great increase of the Roman realm, but to the contraction and downfall of the Italians.[4] For the emperor took captive in this war the best of them, including the Laskaris brothers whom he blinded, finding them guilty. Others were put to the sword. Men who had not taken part in the war were overcome by cowardice. A division of the Italians then besieging the fortress of Serres, whose lord was Theodore Komnenos, fled when they learned of this defeat of their own people, leaving Serres free.[5] They had come quite close to capturing it.

Since, then, the state of the Italians was divided this way and that, in the east as well as the west, and checked by strong adversaries, the emperor John as well as Theodore Komnenos, who was also known as emperor,[6] it began to decline. Immediately, then, when the emperor John had defeated the Italians in the forementioned place, he laid siege to the Roman fortresses which were held by them and he conquered them, since there was no one to help them. For a time the people in the fortresses resisted, but since the emperor conducted sieges which were long in duration and, above all, out of season[7]—for it was not in spring, summer or late autumn but in the middle of winter that he made his attacks, setting up siege towers and battering down battlements—the people inside the fortresses grew weary; some surrendered, redeeming their lives with oaths; others fell in battle or were confined as prisoners. In this way Poimanenon, Lentiana, Charioros, Berbeniakon[8] were conquered by the emperor. Indeed, the emperor John fought the Latins in various ways: he built triremes[9] and stationed them on the Hellespont in a place which is called Holkos.[10] And he caused them a great deal of trouble, setting out against the west, and making plunder of their straits, and ravaging the town of Madyta, and Kallipolis[11] and all the coastal areas which were subject to the Italians.

§22 *The hostilities between John III and the Latins in 1223/4–5 are narrated here and conclude in §24 with the agreement of 1225, whereby the Latins kept only the territory opposite Constantinople and around Nikomedeia (§24.1). Akrop.'s funeral oration for the emperor John III (1254) is the only near-contemporary source (along with Skout. 469–70) for these hostilities. Other later sources are the anonymous fourteenth-century* Life *of the emperor John the Almsgiver (ed. Heisenberg, 164, 221–4), Ephraim (7933–73) and Greg. (I, 25). The date of the battle at Poimanenon can be ascertained from Akrop.'s statement that the battle occurred 'two years' after John III had come to the throne (December 1221): see §19.1. Although Akrop. narrates the events of the battle of Poimanenon after his discussion of the conquest of Thessalonike (§21: October–December 1224), the battle took place* before *that conquest. As is often the case, Akrop. is bringing up to date events in the east, having reported events in the west. See the Introduction, 43. Hendrickx,* Regestes, *107–8, likewise dates the events in §22 to a time before Thessalonike, basing his argument on other sources.*

Akrop. gives the impression, both here and in his funeral oration (Heisenberg, Opera *II, 16.14–26), that the emperor John, ambitious to enlarge his empire, took the initiative in the battle against the Latins at Poimanenon in 1223–4, two years after he came to the throne. At the same time, however, he hints at a conspiracy led by Alexios and Isaac, brothers of the emperor Theodore I. By giving the emperor John credit for initiating hostilities, Akrop. shifts attention away from Theodore's brothers and the fact that John's accession to the throne had been challenged. Greg. (I, 25.3–21) is much more explicit in stating that the brothers were at the head of the Latin army, driven by jealousy. Although they had a blood relationship to the former emperor, they had not been designated his successors. Later, at §55, Akrop. brings into the narrative two other brothers of Theodore I, Michael and Manuel, who went into exile after John III's accession to the throne.*

The battle at Poimanenon, as Akrop. indicates, was only the beginning of a series of engagements by which John III was able to restore most of western Asia Minor to Byzantine hands. Naval engagements along the straits are also indicated. See §22.9 and the Introduction, 100–1, for John III's fleet. Furthermore, during 1224–5 and before the settlement between John III and the Latins, another plot was hatched against the emperor (§23).

[1] Theodore had at least six brothers. Akrop. names only four of them: Alexios and Isaac, here, and Michael and Manuel (§55). The *sebastokrator* George is mentioned in a document from the cartulary of Lembos (MM IV, 35) and may be the unnamed brother at the siege of Lentiana (see §16.2). Another brother, Constantine Laskaris, is known from Chon. (571.55–572.68) and Vill. (§322), who refers elsewhere (§486) to the 'brothers' of Theodore Laskaris. A lead seal of Constantine also survives: see §5.6. At least three of Theodore's brothers held

the dignity of *sebastokrator*, created by the emperor Alexios I Komnenos, and traditionally bestowed on the brothers of the emperor. See Guilland, *Recherches*, I, 5; II, 280, 283; Ferjančić, 'Sevastokratori u Vizantiji', 141–92. Constantine, however, appears to have held the title of despot (Bodleian Baroc. ms. 235, f. 478v: H. O. Coxe, *Catalogi codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Bodleianae* I (Oxford, 1853), 404). This was a departure from twelfth-century practice.

[2] They hoped to use Eudokia to obtain the support of the Latin emperor Robert against the emperor John. She had been promised in marriage to Robert before the emperor Theodore's death. See §18. A second unsuccessful attempt to marry Eudokia to Robert, reported by Baudoin d'Avesnes, can be dated to the time of the agreement in 1225: see Hendrickx, *Regestes*, no. 158, p. 107–8.

[3] Poimanenon, southwest of Kyzikos, was in a part of Asia Minor still under Latin control, in accordance with the treaty between Henry and Theodore, made sometime after 1212: see §15.12. The church of the Archangel Michael, the 'Archgeneral of the Heavenly Forces', was remembered as the site of the emperor's victory. See the *tomos* of 1230 of the patriarch Germanos (ed. Nicole, 77.3–4: ὁ τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου χῶρος) and the *Life* of the emperor John (ed. Heisenberg, 222.6–7: the author of the *Life* locates the church and battle at Anaplous on the Bosphoros). For the church, see Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 206–7.

[4] 'Our affairs heated up, theirs went cold': Akrop.'s funeral oration for John III: *Opera* II, 17.6–7.

[5] Theodore Komnenos Doukas had control of Serres from 1222. See Vasilievsky, 'Epirotica', 276.

[6] Akrop. calls Theodore Komnenos Doukas emperor here although at §22.5, in relating the siege of Serres, he does not. The discrepancy does not, however, show inconsistency on Akrop.'s part but rather a meticulous attention to detail in his ascription of titles. The statement here refers to a time after the battles at Poimanenon and Serres when John III and Theodore Komnenos were pressing the Latins hard by their victories, thus at a time after the conquest of Thessalonike, when Theodore was known as emperor. See §21.2.

[7] These traits of John's warfare are singled out by Akrop. also in his funeral oration for the emperor (*Opera* II, ed. Heisenberg, 18.8–9) and in his summary of the emperor's reign (§52). See also the Introduction, 55–6.

[8] These towns are in the area of Lake Aphnitis: Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 158.

[9] Akrop. gives the impression that a Nicaean fleet was first built under the emperor John, as this is his first mention of ships in the empire of Nicaea. However, Theodore I's naval power was considerable, although he used it

mainly for purposes of defence in the Propontis and along the Aegean coast. See the Introduction, 100–1.

[10] For Holkos, on the shore of Asia Minor between Parium and Lampsakos, see Tomaschek, *Zur historischen Topographie von Kleinasien*, 15; *RE* 8 (1913), 2136. Below at §30.1 Akrop. refers to Holkos as 'a place which is actually called Holkos'. He is drawing attention to the place name as distinct from the word *holkos* which means a 'channel'. For this meaning, see Skout. (470.19–20). For other examples of this usage in Akrop. see §43.3, §44.10, §68.8, §84.4. Akrop. indicates that the emperor had control of Holkos and Lampsakos (see §23) at this time. According to Skout., it was at Holkos that the emperor John stationed galleys to trap boats coming through the straits of the Hellespont from the west, on their way to Constantinople (470.19–22=*Additamenta*, no. 23, p. 283). See Jacoby, 'The Venetian presence in the Latin empire of Constantinople (1204–1261)', 165–6.

[11] The emperor John did not conquer Kallipolis (Gallipoli) and Madyta on the southern shore of the Chersonese until 1235. See §33.

23. While the emperor John was engaged in these affairs, and was fighting the Italians without restraint both on land and sea, a plot was hatched against him. The man who devised it was the emperor's first cousin, Andronikos Nestongos.[1] This man considered the tie of kinship to be of no account and broke the bond of friendship, plotting insurrection against his first cousin the emperor, having as an accomplice in this his brother Isaac[2] and not a few other notables: Phlamoules whom the emperor had honoured as *megas hetaireiarches*,[3] Tarchaneiotes,[4] Synadenos,[5] Stasenos[6] who was Synadenos' brother-in-law by marriage to his sister, Makrenos,[7] and a great number of others. But the plot was in the making for many days and the emperor escaped. He learned about it while he was residing in Lampsakos.[8] Thereupon he destroyed the triremes with fire so that they would not fall into the hands of the Italians and, judging the internal war to be of more importance than the external one, he left from there and went to the area of Achyraous,[9] and there he made an investigation of the plot. All the conspirators were liable to the death penalty.[10] But the emperor applied the law more compassionately and sentenced Isaac Nestongos to blinding and amputation of his hand, as he did also Makrenos. For it was proved that often, when he was behind the emperor, he had been eager to draw his sword and inflict a mortal wound.[11] He subjected some others to small punishments. The majority he let go after having confined them in prison for a time, and the mastermind of the plot, the one who longed after the imperial office, Andronikos Nestongos, he imprisoned in the fortress of Magnesia;[12] so great was the bond of affection that prevented the emperor from harming him. He escaped a

short time later, as some said, by the wish of the emperor, who ordered that he circulate more freely, as if planning for him to secure his freedom clandestinely. Fleeing by night, he went to the land of the Muslims and lived there until his death.

Henceforth the emperor acted more cautiously in his affairs and did not adopt his former openness, but set up around him sentinels and guards who watched over his subjects day and night. Especially intent on these matters was the empress Eirene, for she had a more manly disposition and in all things was more imperial.[13]

§23 *Akrop. is the only source for this conspiracy which took place when John III was fighting the Latins, in 1224–5: see §22.*

[1] The Nestongos (Nostongos) family was one of the most prominent in the empire of Nicaea. Pach. (I, 93.12–15) includes it in his list of the 'great families'. The emperor Theodore II intended to give one of his daughters in marriage to a Nestongos (Pach. I, 95.1–5). On the family, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 150–1; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 173. Andronikos Nestongos is known only from this passage. For other members of the family, see §58, §68, §72.

[2] Isaac is known only from this passage. He cannot be identical with Isaac Nestongos, *epi tes basilikes trapezes*, mentioned later (see §68, §72), since Isaac, the brother of Andronikos, was blinded and had a hand amputated as a punishment for his involvement in the conspiracy.

[3] Phlamoules is not otherwise known. The *hetaireiarches* was in command of the *hetaireia*, the emperor's bodyguard. The title was usually conferred on military men. See Karlin-Hayter, 'L'hétériarque', 101–44. For other holders of this title at Nicaea see §24, §40.

[4] The Tarchaneiotes family is attested from the tenth century in military contexts: see K. Amantos, '*Σύμμεικτα*', '*Ἑλληνικά* 2 (1929), 435–6; also Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 210, 232, 281, 371. It is among the great families listed by Pach. (I, 93.13). See Polemis, *Doukai*, 183–4. Tarchaneiotai had property in the village of Bare, near Smyrna, in the thirteenth century: MM IV, 254. For members of the family (twelfth and thirteenth–fourteenth centuries) attested by seals, see Laurent, *La collection C. Orghidan*, no. 469, pp 235–6; Laurent, *Les bulles métriques*, no. 209, p. 76. For Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes, see §36, §40, §49.

[5] The Synadenos of the conspiracy is perhaps to be identified with the man taken captive by the emperor Theodore I in the battle at Nikomedeia against David Komnenos of Trebizond: see Chon. 626.64–71. On the family, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 178–82; Hannick and Schmalzbauer, 'Die Synadenoi', 125–61, esp. nos 19, 20, pp 132–4.

[6] Unknown, apart from this reference.

[7] For another member of the family, see §49.14 and Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 146.

[8] This is Akrop.'s first reference to Lampsakos, on the Asia Minor coast of the Hellespont which, along with Holkos, appears to have been the site of a shipyard. See also §27. Both places must have come into the control of the emperor John in 1224. For Lampsakos' significance, see the Introduction, 100.

[9] The fortress of Achyraous (see §15.14) was under Latin control until the battle at Poimanenon in 1224, as a result of which the emperor John gained control of northwestern Asia Minor. See §22.

[10] Treason was punishable by death and confiscation of property. See Zachariä von Lingenthal, *Geschichte des griechisch-römischen Rechts*, 336–7.

[11] The eighth-century lawbook, the *Ecloga*, gives amputation of the hand as a punishment for someone who intends to kill with a sword, even if he does not cause the death of his victim but merely wounds him: ed. L. Burgmann, *Ecloga* (Frankfurt, 1983), 17.46 (p. 242). For the amputation of one and not both hands, see Justinian's novel 134.13 (*CIC* III, p. 688). The emperor's 'compassionate' treatment of the conspirators is mentioned by Akrop. also in his funeral oration for John III (*Opera* II, 22.1–25) and in the fourteenth-century *Life* (ed. Heisenberg, 226–7). See also at §52.16.

[12] This is Akrop.'s only reference to Magnesia (modern Manisa) in Lydia, a major stronghold which housed the treasury, the mint, and served as a functional capital of the empire. See Pach. I, 101.20; Skout. 507.13–20; Hendy, *Studies*, 443–5; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 44–6; Introduction, 88. The fortifications at Magnesia, parts of which still remain, are thought to date to the time of the Nicaean empire: Foss, 'Late Byzantine fortifications in Lydia', 306–9.

[13] Akrop. is consistently favourable to the empress Eirene. See also §34, §39. Here Akrop. contrasts Eirene's 'manly disposition' and 'imperial' manner with the emperor John's more informal behaviour ('his former openness'). His characterization is similar to Zon.'s (III, 765.17–766.3) description of the empress Eirene's demeanour in contrast to that of her husband, Alexios I Komnenos. See also §39.2 and the Introduction, 57.

24. Since the Italians wished to come to an agreement they ceded to the emperor also the town of Pegai.[1] And so the emperor John made peace with them in this way, the Latins surrendering to him everything towards the south, while they still kept the land to the north that is next to the city of Constantine and is near the city of Nikomedes.[2]

But something else happened before this. The inhabitants of Adrianople sent an embassy to the emperor asking that he dispatch an army to them and free them from the hands of the Italians.[3] He sent the *protostrator* Ises,[4] giving

him an army; John Kammytzes[5] was with him. They crossed the Hellespont, travelled through Macedonia[6] and arrived at Adrianople; when they had entered the city they stayed there. Because of this, the emperor John had the hope of gaining control of the surrounding area as well. But Theodore Komnenos, whom my account has already made known, was in control of everything except for the Rhodope mountain (also called Achridos)[7] and the towns on it, and Melenikon. Over these Sthlavos[8] ruled, a kinsman of the emperor Asan who had been given the honour of despot by the emperor of the city of Constantine, Henry, whose daughter, born to him by a concubine, Sthlavos married.

Now this Sthlavos, to draw the account out a little, having found the fortress of Melenikon[9] strong and impregnable to practically all adversaries, was independent and was subject to none of the surrounding rulers. Sometimes he was an ally of the Italians, joining with them because of his relationship by marriage;[10] at other times, of the Bulgarians, uniting with them because of kinship; at other times, of Theodore Komnenos. He was never subordinate to anyone[11] nor did he join with anyone in good faith and agreement. After the death of Sthlavos' wife, he married the daughter of Petraliphas who was the brother of Theodore Komnenos' wife.[12] My narrative will explain about her[13] further on.

As I said, except for the lands which were subject to this Sthlavos, everything had come under Theodore Komnenos. Since Mosynopolis, Xantheia and Gratianou[14] itself were under him, crossing over the mountain of Stageira which the people call Makre,[15] he overran the lands on the other side of the Hebros, finding everything free and not fortified by any garrison. Thereupon he went to Didymoteichon[16] also and, not long after, was named emperor of those places.[17] When he arrived at Adrianople he found within it the forementioned Ises, the *protostrator*, and Kammytzes, with the army of the emperor John. Beguiling the inhabitants with deceitful statements that he would make them extremely wealthy and raise them above other Romans, he persuaded them to expel the army of the emperor and to admit him. Then the *protostrator* Ises and Kammytzes were led out with the army which was with them, on oath that no one of them would suffer ill-treatment. As they were leaving, the *protostrator* did not see Theodore Komnenos at all—for this had been agreed upon with them—but when Kammytzes happened upon him, he did not dismount or make obeisance as to an emperor. Theodore Komnenos was indignant at this, for he wanted all Romans to consider him emperor, since he was also called emperor, and he poured abuse on the man and all but struck him. This became an occasion for the emperor to reward Kammytzes. When they crossed back over the Hellespont and went to the emperor, Kammytzes was given the honour of *megas hetaireiarches* on this account.[18]

When Theodore Komnenos had gained control of Adrianople as well, he caused the Italians a great deal of trouble. He overran everything held by them and, when he had gone as far as Bizye, he held the area outside the town, took away a great deal of booty from there and, going as far as the very gates of the city of Constantine,[19] instilled great fear in the Latins. It was then that Anselm of Cahieu, who was married to the daughter of the emperor Theodore Laskaris,[20] was wounded in the neck with a spear by one of Theodore Komnenos' men.[21] The blow appeared to be fatal for him, but he was cured by the skill of the doctors. From that time on, however, his voice was hoarse and the vertebrae of his neck did not turn easily.[22]

§24 *Akrop. resumes here the account of the campaign which he began in §22, having interrupted it to relate the Nestongos conspiracy (§23) against the emperor John which took place during that campaign. The agreement mentioned here is the treaty between John III and Robert of Courtenay which ended the hostilities initiated in 1223/4 by Theodore Laskaris' brothers. Akrop. also goes back in time to an event which took place before the treaty in order to provide information about Theodore Komnenos Doukas' conquests, and his control of Adrianople. In the course of relating Theodore's success there, he refers to him already as emperor at the time of his entry into Adrianople, that is late 1224/early 1225. See §24.17 and §21.2.*

[1] The date of the treaty is 1225: Hendrickx, *Regestes*, no. 158, pp 107–8. Pegai ('Espigal', 'Spigacius' in western sources, modern Karabiga), a port on the sea of Marmara, west of Kyzikos, at the mouth of the Granikos river, was one of the first places in Asia Minor that the Latins occupied after their conquest of Constantinople: Vill. §305. See Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine fortifications*, 154–5. In 1211, before the campaign of Henry against Theodore I (§16), it was the Latins' only remaining possession in northwestern Asia Minor, according to the letter of that date by the emperor Henry: *ante civitatem Spigacii, quam illuc solam habebamus* (Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 415.101–2, 429). The Latins made an attempt to retake it under John of Brienne. On this see §30. Both Greek and Latin sources attest to the large Latin population at Pegai before the Fourth Crusade: Vill. §305; Chon. 601.79–80; Skout. 452.18–21=*Additamenta*, no. 2, p. 277.

The position of Nikomedeia is unclear from Akrop.'s description. He says that the Latins kept 'the land that . . . is near the city of Nikomedes'. Later, in 1240–1 (at §37), John III is said to 'set off from Nikomedeia' to besiege Dakibyza and Niketiatou, both on the gulf of Nikomedeia. See Foss, *Nicomedia*, 50, for the view that Nikomedeia became Nicaean only in 1240–1. If Nikomedeia was not the emperor's by the terms of the 1225 treaty, then it would appear to have become Nicaean by 1240–1.

[2] By 'the land . . . near the city of Nikomedes' (Nikomedeia), Akrop. refers to the Optimates theme: see at §7.13. See also §37.14.

[3] By 'before this' Akrop. refers to a time before the treaty of 1225. The appeal of the inhabitants of Adrianople to the emperor John must have taken place sometime in 1224, since Akrop. describes it as happening before the settlement between the Latins and the emperor John. Adrianople was last mentioned above (§13), in 1205, at the time of the Latin defeat. In 1206, the inhabitants of the city offered it to the Latin emperor Henry: Vill. II, §422–32; Chon. 627–9; TTh II, 18–19.

[4] The '*protostrator* Ises' is John Ises, mentioned in a chrysobull (1221) of the emperor Theodore I for the monastery of Patmos: Vranouse, *Βυζαντινὰ Ἔγγραφὰ* I, 119–23, at 121.26–8. Ises confirmed the monastery in its right to property. His name is also referred to in this connection in a later document: Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Βυζαντινὰ Ἔγγραφα* II, 159.21, 161, 162. On the title *protostrator*, see §12.1.

[5] John Kammytzes is related to Manuel Kammytzes, *protostrator* and cousin of Isaac II and Alexios III. For him, see §12.1. John is not known from any other source but property of the Kammytzes family is attested in the Maeander valley before 1204: *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 218.23–5, 246: *Provintia Laodikie et Meandri, cum pertinentia Sampson . . . cum Camicatis*. See Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 241. The Kammytzes family is one of those listed by Pach. (I, 93.12) as part of the 'golden chain'. Puech, *L'aristocratie et le pouvoir*, II, 352, suggests that John III sent Kammytzes to Adrianople because of his family's rivalry with the Branas family who had been established by the Latins in that city (Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 122). Kammytzes was made *megas hetaireiarches* as a reward for his role in this expedition: §24.18. The last-mentioned holder of the title, Phlamoules (§23.3) had been involved in a conspiracy against the emperor in 1224.

[6] By 'Macedonia' Akrop. means the whole of modern Thrace: see above §13.

[7] Achridos, the name Akrop. gives to the Rhodope mountain range (see also, §43, §54, §57, §59), is the name of the region that straddles the Arda river valley and also of a bishopric attached to the metropolis of Philippopolis. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 10–11, 244–5. It is not to be confused with the town Ochrid (Ἀχριδῶν), the seat of a bishopric.

[8] (Alexios) Sthlavos or Slav ('Sclavo', 'Esclas', 'Esclave', in western sources) was a first cousin of Boril: Henry of Valenciennes (§505). He became the emperor Henry's vassal after the Latin victory against Boril at Philippopolis in 1208. Henry pledged to give Slav '*toute la conqueste que nous avons faite ichi*' and his daughter in marriage: Henry of Valenciennes, §545–8, §555–9, here at §548. Henry's letter of 1212 refers to '*Sclavo, genero nostro*': Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 418.1. That Slav held the title of despot is confirmed by a *sigillion* of

1220 for the monastery of the Virgin Speleotissa at Melnik which bears the signature, 'the despot Alexios Slav': *Actes de Vatopédi*, I, 124–8, here at 128.38. The emperor Henry's bestowal of this title on his son-in-law was in keeping with Byzantine practice. See Magdalino, 'A neglected authority', 320, for the title after 1204. On Slav, see Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 95–8.

Only Akrop. specifies that Henry's daughter, Slav's wife, was his child by a concubine. The emperor Henry was married twice, to the daughter of the marquis Boniface of Montferrat and, after her death, to the daughter of Boril: Robert of Clari, §115, §116. For Slav's second wife, see §24.12.

[9] Melenikon (modern Melnik), southwest of the Pirin mountains between the Roupel (§58) and Kresna defiles, is built on and surrounded by sedimentary rock formations which have eroded to form irregular, jagged crevasses. It is therefore impossible to attack, as Akrop. (see also §59) and Skyl. (351.83–5), before him, remarked. On the name 'Melnik', see Grégoire, 'Encore les Melniki-Melingi', 280. Slav must have been established at Melnik by 1220, the date of his *sigillion* for the monastery of the Virgin Speleotissa. He had been based at Tzepaina, 50 km west of Philippopolis, from which he transferred his residence to Melnik, perhaps after his agreement with the emperor Henry: *Actes de Vatopédi* I, 127.4–5. The extent of Slav's authority would seem to have been limited to the northwest Rhodope mountain region, since only Tzepaina and Melnik are associated with his name in the sources. Vestiges of Slav's residence and authority in the region can be seen in the word Dospat, the Turkish name for the mountain chain in the northwest Rhodope, at the source of the Nestos river. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 5 n. 2 and 4 n. 10. For the history of Melnik, see Dujčev, 'Melnik au Moyen Age', 28–41; T. Vlachos, *Die Geschichte der byzantinischen Stadt Melenikon* (Thessalonike, 1969). See below, §44.

[10] He joined forces with Eustace, Henry's brother, in the Rhodope but also in Thessalonike (Henry de Valenciennes, §549, §571), when Boril attacked that city during Henry's absence in Asia Minor in 1211: Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 417.159–418.171.

[11] A Latin document of 1229 refers to Slav and his territory as still distinct from, and independent of, any other powers: *totam terram de Esclaves* (TTh II, 268). It appears, however, that Slav became dependent on Asan II sometime after 1229, probably after Theodore Komnenos Doukas' defeat in 1230 (see §25). A ring found at Trnovo, bearing the inscription, 'Slav Stolnik Tsarev', 'Slav, Seneschal of the Tsar', once identified as Slav's ring, has been redated to the late thirteenth / early fourteenth century. See Totev, 'Two Byzantine signet rings from Bulgaria', 18–19.

[12] Neither the date of Slav's second marriage nor that of the death of his first wife, daughter of the emperor Henry, is known. It is likely, however, that

the second marriage, to Theodore Komnenos' niece, took place after the death of the emperor Henry in 1216.

The 'Petraliphas' of this passage and his 'daughter' cannot be identified with certainty. Akrop. mentions several members of this family in the course of his narrative: (1) John Petraliphas, *megas chartoularios* under John III (§37, §40); (2) Theodore Petraliphas, son-in-law of Demetrios Tornikes (§49) and brother of Michael II's wife, Theodora (§49, §80); (3) Theodora herself (§49, §64); (4) Maria, sister of Theodora and Theodore, married to Sphrantzes (§68). The only other source that gives a genealogy of the family, the *Life* of St Theodora of Arta, identifies Theodora's father as John Petraliphas (PG 127.904A; ed. Moustoxydes, 42). Nicol (*Despotate*, Appendix, 215–16) and Polemis (*Doukai*, 165) assume that the Petraliphas of this passage is John Petraliphas, the *megas chartoularios*. Nicol further identifies this John Petraliphas with the father of Theodora, Theodore, and Maria. Akrop. gives two clues to the identity of Petraliphas and his daughter: Petraliphas is the brother of Theodore Komnenos' wife (Maria: Polemis, *Doukai*, 165) and his account will discuss the daughter again later. The only later reference to a female member of the family beside Theodora is to Maria, her sister, said to have married a Sphrantzes and then widowed (§68). If this is the daughter of Petraliphas mentioned here, then the latter is to be identified with John Petraliphas, the father of Theodora and Theodore, according to the *Life* of St Theodora of Arta. He should not be identified with the emperor John III's *megas chartoularios* (as Nicol and Polemis do, although Akrop. does not) but with the John Petraliphas who took part in the 1195 coup against Isaac II (Chon. 451.3); Patlagean, 'Une sainte souveraine grecque', 457. If, however, Akrop. does not explain about Petraliphas' daughter later on, even though he says he does, then the daughter of this passage and her father remain unidentified.

[13] It is clear from the Greek that 'about her', *περὶ ἧς*, can refer only to the 'daughter of Petraliphas'. See §24.12 and below §68.

[14] On the basis of Akrop.'s account, it appears that these towns were in Theodore's possession already by the time of his expedition to Didymoteichon and Adrianople mentioned here, late 1224 (for the date, see §24.3); Akrop. uses the imperfect of the verb, *ἐτέλει* (Heis. p. 39.18), implying a prevailing situation. However, they must have only just come into his possession, as they are not mentioned in a letter of John Apokaukos dating to February 1225, and referring to the conquests of Thessalonike, and Christoupolis, to the east: Vasilievsky, 'Epirotica', 279; Stavridou-Zaphraka, '*Συμβολή στο ζήτημα*', 48. For Mosynopolis, see above, §13. Xantheia (modern Xanthi), apparently spared by John the Vlach in 1206 (see §13), became increasingly important in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 93–6. Gratianou (modern Gratene), 'the city of Gratian', 10 km to the northeast of Komotine, is mentioned in the sources starting in the thirteenth century. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 113–15; Soustal, *Thrakien*, 276–7. *Γρατζιανούς* should be emended to read *Γρατιανοῦς* (Heis. p. 39.18), according to the suggestion by Bases (ed. Wirth, p. xxvii).

[15] Makre, the name of a mountain and a town (see above, §13) on the Aegean coast of Thrace, is mentioned by Greek and Latin sources, together with Traianoupolis: Vill. §382; Henry of Valenciennes, §568. Both Chon. (452.2) and Akrop. associate the name Stageira with Makre, Chon. saying that Stageira is 'now called' Makre and Akrop. that Makre is the people's name for the mountain. Cf. Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 117–18; Soustal, *Thrakien*, 342–3.

[16] Situated on a tributary of the Hebros river, Didymoteichon was pillaged and destroyed by Kalojan (Akrop.'s 'John') in 1206: Vill. §§442–9. The Latins rescued its inhabitants from Kalojan and placed the town, along with Adrianople, in the care of Theodore Branas who held it from the Latins: Vill. §422–3, §442; TTh II, 17–19; Chon. 645.89–646.3.

[17] This passage indicates that Theodore Komnenos Doukas was known as emperor in late 1224/early 1225, and not as late as 1226 but see above at §21.2.

[18] This incident is reported only by Akrop. (and Skout. 473.10–18) and is characteristic of the 'Nicaean' reaction to the assumption of imperial power by Theodore Komnenos Doukas. On this see above, §21 and the Introduction, 94–5. The bestowal of the title of *megas hetaireiarches* on Kammytzes was particularly significant. Proven loyalty to the emperor was an asset for one in charge of the emperor's bodyguard. The previous holder of the title, Phlamoules, had been found guilty of treason in 1224. See §23.3.

[19] Theodore Komnenos Doukas' attack on Bizye and Constantinople must date to 1225, according to Akrop.'s account. Bizye (modern Vize), between Adrianople and Constantinople, had been assigned to the Latin emperor of Constantinople in the *Partitio*: ed. Carile, 217, 232–3. For the 'area outside the town', the unfortified part outside the walls, see Lampousiades, '*Ὁδοιπορικόν*', 55–9.

[20] The daughter of the emperor Theodore Laskaris, Eudokia, was mentioned above as the prospective bride of the emperor Robert (§18) and as a possible negotiating piece in Constantinople for the disaffected brothers of the emperor Theodore I (§22). Baudoin d'Avesnes (425–6) says that a marriage with Robert was twice discussed and declined. Eudokia's marriage to Anselm would have taken place, at the earliest, at the time of the treaty between John III and Robert in 1225. See §47 where the marriage is said to have been the wish of the empress Eirene, Eudokia's sister, and the emperor John III. The mention in this passage does not make clear whether Anselm

was already married to Eudokia at the time of Theodore Komnenos Doukas' attack on Bizye. The latter cannot be dated with certainty. The identity of 'Anselm of Cahieu' is also problematic. An Anselm of Cahieu was in charge of Bizye in late 1205: Vill. §421. In 1219 an Anselm of Cahieu is mentioned as head of the barons, and in 1238 as baillie: TTh II, 214, 346. See Hendrickx, 'Les institutions de l'empire latin de Constantinople', 144–7. Longnon, *Les compagnons de Villehardouin*, 200–1, distinguishes three generations with the same name and identifies Eudokia's husband with the grandson of the 1219 Anselm and son of the 1238 baillie. It is more likely that Eudokia married the son of the crusader who was put in charge of Bizye in 1205 and was head of the barons in 1219 and that this son was later baillie (1238). For Eudokia and Anselm later (1247) at Tzouroulos, see §47.

[21] I have adopted the proposal of Šestakov, based on the Bekker edition, to insert *τῶν* at Heis. 41.6 before *τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ*. See Wirth, 'Addenda', xxvii.

[22] The description is one of several indications of Akrop.'s interest in, and knowledge of, physiology and medical practice. On this, see the Introduction, 46, 47.

25. When Theodore Komnenos had increased his fortunes in this way, he came to have a border with the Bulgarians, and he made a treaty with the emperor of the Bulgarians, John Asan, whom my account previously mentioned (he ruled as emperor over the affairs of the Bulgarians after Boril),[1] and he formed a kinship tie with him, taking for his brother Manuel Asan's daughter Maria, born to Asan by a concubine.[2] But, being a man who conducted himself arrogantly and in a most disorderly fashion, not only in imperial affairs but also generally in all civil matters, Theodore Angelos broke his treaty with John Asan. Transgressing his oaths[3] and breaking his truce with neighbours, he set out against the Bulgarians, having assembled a large army composed of Romans and Italians.[4] Passing by the city of Hadrian, he marched around the area of the upper Hebros, seeking to provoke war with the Bulgarians. But he was really seeking his own destruction. For he thought that the Bulgarians, terrified at the mere advance of his army, would not resist at all. But the Bulgarians did not respond in this way. John Asan, with more confidence in Theodore Angelos' perjury and treaty violations than in his own forces, took a small auxiliary force of Scyths, not a thousand in number, and conducted himself most boldly in the battle; some say that he hung Theodore's written oath on his standard. The armies engaged at a place near the banks of the Hebros; they call it Klokotnitza.[5] To present the whole situation in brief, Theodore was completely defeated by the Bulgarians and Scyths and he was captured by the enemy, while not a few of his relations, his officials and chosen men,[6] and all their possessions, became booty for the Bulgarians.

Asan was rather more compassionately disposed towards the captured masses; he freed most of the army and especially the common people and the rabble, and sent them to their villages and cities, ostensibly acting compassionately but also perhaps serving his own interests. For he wanted to rule over them, having broken them away from the Roman realm. He was successful in this. When he marched out against them afterwards, they all went over to him without bloodshed, and the city of Hadrian[7] became subject to him and also, about the same time, Didymoteichon,[8] then all of Voleron,[9] Serres,[10] Pelagonia and Prilep[11] and the surrounding area. He overran Great Vlachia[12] but also gained possession of Elbanon[13] and plundered as far as Illyrikon.[14]

When he had accomplished most of what he had resolved to do and had arranged affairs to his liking, he returned to his own region, leaving some of the fortresses to be ruled by Romans, but subjecting most to him,[15] posting soldiers in them and generals and those who collect the public taxes. He seemed to everyone then to be both admirable and blessed. For he did not use the sword on his own people, nor was he defiled by the deaths of Romans, as were the rulers of the Bulgarians before him. Therefore he was regarded with affection not only by Bulgarians but also by Romans and other nations.

§25 *Akrop. describes the battle at Klokotnitza in 1230 between John Asan and Theodore Komnenos, whom he begins to call Angelos from this point on in his narrative. Once again he ascribes to Theodore transgression of oaths and a lack of 'order' in the way he conducted himself. See below at §25.3 and the Introduction, 94. For the characterization of Asan, see §39.13, and the Introduction, 91–2. The extent of Asan's victory is described in his commemorative inscription in the church of the Forty Martyrs, Trnovo (see §25.5, 7) and in the document extending trading rights to Dubrovnik in 1230: Ilinskii,* Gramoti, *13.*

[1] See §20.

[2] Akrop. is the only source for the marriage of Manuel Angelos and Maria (see also §26) which can be dated, from its mention in the narrative, to 1225 or later. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 90. For Maria, see also below §26, §38. She was his second wife. He had been married previously to the sister of Stephen II Nemanja, king of Serbia: Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 55–6. On Manuel, see §26, §38, §39. Akrop. states here, at §26.6 and at §38.2 that Maria was Asan's daughter 'by a concubine'. Bozhilov (*Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 86–7, 100–1) argues that Akrop. is mistaken and that, rather, Maria is the daughter of Asan's first wife, Anna, whom he married before he came to power and who is attested in the *Synodikon* of Boril (ed. Popruzhenko, §117, p. 88).

[3] Akrop.'s characterization of Theodore as one who conducted himself in a 'disorderly' manner (ἀτακτότερον: Heis. 41.20) plays on his earlier reference

to Theodore as ignorant of *τάξις* (Heis. 34.10), hierarchy and protocol as it is practised in the imperial court: see §21. Unlike Greg. (I, 28.9–17) who does not mention violation of a treaty but rather gives the impression that Asan took the initiative in attacking, Akrop. accuses Theodore of treachery in transgressing his oaths. See above at §14 where Akrop. claims that Theodore Komnenos Doukas took an oath before leaving Theodore I's service.

[4] These 'Italians' may have been western auxiliary forces sent by the emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen. Theodore Komnenos had sent an embassy to Frederick in 1229 with gifts and soldiers. See Richard of San Germano, 162, 164; Auvray, *Registres* I, no. 332, 204–5. See the discussion of this passage in Kiesewetter, 'Die Heirat zwischen Konstanze-Anna von Hohenstaufen und Kaiser Johannes III. Batatzes von Nikaia', 246–8, n.19.

[5] The battle at Klokotnitza, a few kilometres from Haskovo, took place on 9 March 1230, according to an inscription in the church of the Forty Martyrs at Trnovo. See Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 339, 342, 587–96. For the battle see also Richard of San Germano, 166 (April 1230); Aubry, 927.5–7. The name of the site of the battle is known in Byzantine sources only from Akrop. (and Skout. 474.17). For Klokotnitza, see Soustal, *Thrakien*, 310. Until the 1930s, the church of Sveti Dukh in the fortress near the mineral baths at Haskovo was the site of an annual ceremony on the eve of Pentecost, the feast day of the church, in remembrance of those who died at Klokotnitza: Hoddinott, *Bulgaria in Antiquity*, 316.

[6] Asan's commemorative inscription in the church of the Forty Martyrs at Trnovo records that he took Theodore Komnenos and all his 'boyars' prisoner: Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 593.

[7] Akrop. relates the names of the places over which Asan became master from east to west, following the order of Asan's march. Asan's commemorative inscription at Trnovo mentions Adrianople as the easternmost limit of his newly acquired territories: Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 593. Stavridou-Zaphraka, '*Η αυτοκρατορία της Θεσσαλονίκης επί Μανουήλ Δούκα*', 159–60, suggests that Akrop.'s list of conquests was taken from the inscription in the church of the Forty Martyrs, Trnovo, which he would have seen when he went on embassy. For the embassy, see §84, and Introduction, 45. However, the inscription mentions only the limits of the conquest and does not list the towns, as does Akrop. Another source for Asan's conquests is the text of his trading privileges for Dubrovnik in 1230. Among the towns in which trade is permitted are Adrianople, Didymoteichon, Skopje, Prilep, Devol, the land of Albanon and Thessalonike: Ilinskii, *Gramoti*, 13. At §44 Akrop. gives an indirect indication of Asan's victory in 1230 when he enumerates the towns John III won from the Bulgarians.

[8] A document of 1230 by which Asan granted trading rights to Dubrovnik includes Didymoteichon: Smiciklas, *Codex diplomaticus* III, no. 296, p. 337; Thallóczy, Jireček, and Sufflay, *Acta et diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis* I, no. 163, pp 50–1. Theodore had gained control over Adrianople and Didymoteichon late in 1224: see §24.

[9] 'All of Voleron' is a reference to the theme of Voleron, in existence from the eleventh century. It comprised a large part of the north Aegean coast, with Christoupolis (modern Kaballa) to the west, Makre to the east, Mt Papikion to the north. In the 1198 chrysobull of Alexios III, Voleron is part of the tripartite theme of Voleron, Strymon and Thessalonike: TTh I, 264. See Soustal, *Thrakien*, 212–13; also §78.7.

[10] Serres is mentioned at §22 as one of Theodore's territories in 1224. The Latins abandoned the siege at Serres when they heard of their defeat by the emperor John III at Poimanenon.

[11] Prilep and Pelagonia (modern Bitola) are mentioned together in the 1198 chrysobull of Alexios III and in the *Partitio* as constituting a theme (*provincia*): TTh I, 262–3; *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 221, 280. Theodore had control of Prilep from early in his tenure of power (§14).

[12] The toponym Vlachia, land of the Vlachs, appears in western and Byzantine sources from the twelfth century as a name for certain regions of Thessaly: TTh I, 266; *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 221.107. Chon., 638.50, likewise uses 'Great Vlachia' to refer to one region of Thessaly, 'the highland parts', while Akrop. (also §38) is the first author to mean the whole of Thessaly, bounded by the Aegean (east), the Pindos mountains (west), Mt Olympos and Servia (north) and Neopatras and Lamia (south). See Soulis, 'The Thessalian Vlachia', 271–3; Magdalino, 'Between Romaniae: Thessaly and Epirus in the later Middle Ages', 96, 100. For 'Great Vlachia' see also §38.12.

[13] The form of the name, Elbanon, as it appears in Heisenberg's edition (p. 43.2) is unattested. It is clear from Skout. (474.31) and Ephraim (8115) that Albanon and not the fortress of Elbasan is meant in this passage. Albanon, the mountainous region on the Via Egnatia to the east of Dyrrachion and west of Lake Ochrid, is mentioned above (§14) as part of the area under Theodore Komnenos Doukas by 1217. See Ducellier, 'L'Arbanon et les Albanais au XI^{e} siècle', 353–68. Asan refers to his control of Albanon both in his inscription commemorating his victory in the church of the Forty Martyrs, Trnovo, and in his trade agreement with Dubrovnik (1230): Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 593; Smiciklas, *Codex diplomaticus* III, no. 296, p. 337; Ilinskii, *Gramoti*, 13. See also below §49, §66, §67.

[14] The area north of Epiros. The ancient region of Illyrikon included roughly the area from New Epiros to the Danube: Pauly-Wissowa, *RE* 9, s.v. 'Illyricum', cols 1085–8.

[15] On documents issued after 1230 and on coins Asan calls himself 'tsar of the Bulgarians and Greeks': 1230 charter for Dubrovnik (Ilinskii, *Gramoti*, 13; Smiciklas, *Codex diplomaticus* III, no. 296, p. 337); Gerasimov, 'Sceaux bulgares en or des XIII^{e} et XIV^{e} siècles', 61–5. His seals and coins bear the image of St Demetrios, patron saint of Thessalonike, and are therefore similar to the coins of the empire of Thessalonike. Hendy (*Coinage and Money*, 296–7) suggests that these may have been struck after 1230 to be used in the territories conquered from Theodore Komnenos Doukas. For Akrop.'s characterization of Asan here, see also §39 and Introduction, 91–2.

26. When, as my narrative related, Theodore Angelos fell captive to Asan, along with other blood relations and eminent men, he was imprisoned by Asan, but was treated well for the most part. This was so for a long time.[1] But when he was detected plotting rebellion at home, Asan blinded him.[2] However, his brother, Manuel Angelos, who had been honoured by his brother [Theodore] with the rank of despot, fled when the Roman army was routed, went to the area of Thessalonike and was called despot;[3] he was master of this city and the area around it, and confirmed his documents with signatures in red [ink]. One of the ambassadors sent by the emperor John remarked mockingly with reference to him that 'the hymn sung to Christ applies to you more, "you the *basileus* and *despotes*" '.[4]

So, then, it was from that time on that Manuel Angelos was in control of the lands and cities in the western parts which had been left unconquered.[5] He was not troubled on the whole by the Bulgarians, since he shared his bed with Asan's daughter by a concubine.[6]

§26 *Akrop. refers to a period after Theodore Komnenos Doukas' defeat at Klokotnitza (1230), when his brother Manuel ruled in Thessalonike, and before he was released from imprisonment by Asan (1237): see §38. Manuel, who was already despot before 1230 (see §26.3), returned from the battlefield to rule in Thessalonike as despot and as emperor. See §26.3, 4, and the Introduction, 96–7. For Manuel's fall from power, see §38.*

[1] Theodore's relative freedom during his imprisonment can be seen in a *prostagma* issued by him in 1234, in which he refers to himself as emperor. In the document addressed to the bishop of Larissa, Theodore intervenes in the appointment of a deacon, son of the deceased bishop, to fill a bishopric: Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Ἀνάλεκτα IV, no. 37, pp 118–19. See Stiernon, *REB* 28 (1970), 306, on the date of this document.

[2] Only Akrop. (and Skout. 475.8–10; Ephraim, 8131–4) refer to Theodore's plotting as the reason for his blinding. This detail is consistent with Akrop.'s

characterization of Theodore (see §25.3) and also of Asan who is described as 'compassionate' and different from other Bulgarian rulers (§25). See the Introduction, 91–2. For other references to Theodore's blinding see Aubry, 927.5–7, 933.10, 938.42; Richard of San Germano, 166; Pach. I, 115.17–18.

[3] That Manuel, called Angelos by Akrop. but Doukas or Komnenos Doukas in documents, seals, and coins, was despot when Theodore was emperor, before his defeat in 1230, is corroborated by the minutes of a court case held in Thessalonike in the 1230s: 'When the previous emperor Theodore Doukas and his brother the most powerful despot Manuel were in power' (Simon, 'Witwe Sachlikina gegen Witwe Horaia', 325–75, here 344.308–11). See also an (undated) case which came before John Apokaukos (1199/1200–32) in which the 'despot Manuel Doukas' is mentioned: Papadopoulos-Kerameus, '*Ἰωάννης Ἀπόκαυκος καὶ Νικήτας Χωνιάτης*', 379. Theodore could have bestowed the title of despot on his brother any time after his proclamation as emperor: see §21. That Manuel still had the title of despot also after Theodore's defeat is attested for 1234: Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα*, IV, 119.5–6; for the date see Stiernon, *REB* 28 (1970), 306; see also the 1234 charter for Dubrovnik (§26.4). A reference to Manuel's having taken his brother's place after the latter's defeat is made in a letter of Bardanes (1230) to John Grasso (ed. Hoeck and Loenertz, 185–6, esp. 186.19–23).

[4] Akrop. remarks on the discrepancy in Manuel's title and his behaviour: he signed in red ink, a prerogative of an emperor, although, as a despot, he should have used purple (*porphyras*) ink. On this see Failler, 'Les insignes et la signature du despote', 171–86, esp. 180–5. However, Akrop.'s comments on Manuel show that he was not merely adopting the prerogatives of an emperor; he actually bore the title. The mocking words of the ambassador, 'you the *basileus* and *despotes*', allude to the Sunday vesper hymn: *Σὲ τὸν βασιλέα καὶ δεσπότην Ἄγγελοι ἀπαύστως ἀνυμνοῦσιν* (*Παρακλητική* [Rome, 1885; Athens, 1975, 1984], 356) and allude to Manuel's status as emperor and despot. This interpretation of Akrop. is corroborated by letters and documents in which Manuel is addressed, or referred to, as *despotes* and *basileus*: Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 381.4–6; 382.40; Simon, 'Witwe Sachlikina gegen Witwe Horaia', 338.187–8. Likewise, the exarch Christopher, writing to Asan, refers to Manuel as 'your son-in-law, the *despotes kai basileus*': ed. Kurtz, 'Christophoros von Ankyra als Exarch des Patriarchen Germanos II', 141.22–3. In this letter Christopher refers to his visit to Manuel in the 1230s. He could be the 'ambassador of the emperor John' mentioned in this passage. See the Introduction, 38.

Ferjančić argues that it was sometime between 1234–5 that Manuel was emperor and until 1237, when he was expelled from Thessalonike by his brother (see §38). He bases his argument on the fact that a charter of

Dubrovnik (March 1234) calls Manuel 'despot' but an act of a case which came before the archbishop of Ochrid in 1235 (ed. Prinzing, 234) refers to him as 'emperor': Ferjančić, 'Solunski car Manojlo Andjeo (1230–1237)', 93–101. On Manuel's foreign policy, see Stavridou-Zaphraka, '*Η αυτοκρατορία της Θεσσαλονίκης επί Μανουήλ Δούκα* (1230—1237)—*η εξωτερική πολιτική*', 158–78. On Manuel see also §38, §39.

[5] It is difficult to know what lands these might be since Asan claims, in his inscription in the church of the Forty Martyrs, Trnovo, to be master of all the land from Adrianople to Dyrrachion. See §25.7.

[6] For Manuel's marriage to Asan's illegitimate daughter, see §25.2.

27. But let my narrative proceed, in turn, to the Latins in the city of Constantine. As we related earlier, since Robert, whom they had as their emperor, as my account stated, died when he reached Euripos[1] (his brother Baldwin was left who was not yet of age),[2] the people in Constantinople sent an embassy to John,[3] who had the title of king of Jerusalem and boasted a great reputation in military stratagems, surpassing his contemporaries in strength of arm[4] and in stature. They asked that he come to them and be proclaimed emperor of Constantinople, and rule as monarch over the people in the city, and take as his son-in-law Baldwin whom they thought they had in line for the succession; for the king had a little daughter. After the death of the king, Baldwin would rule over them as emperor, having grown older; for the king was exceedingly old, having lived about 80 years or even longer. I myself saw him and was greatly impressed by the man's size which surpassed that of others by far in every dimension, both in height and girth.[5]

The king assented to the embassy and arrived at the city of Constantine, having made the journey by sea. For he did not have sufficient men to march overland.[6] When he reached the city of Constantine he did not find it easy to go out and take the initiative in battle. For he knew that the emperor John was most suited for command and practised in strategies in battles against enemies. So he blamed himself for the undertaking and that he had assumed the task in the first place. He declared that those people were wrong who said that he would arrive in lands where the man who ruled as emperor did not know how to govern—if indeed they believed this to be so and were not deliberately inciting him for their own purposes. For he knew what he was talking about when he said that if 10 such territories were under the rule of the emperor John he [the latter] would know well how to govern and rule them as emperor and preserve them from the enemy. And so, either because of this or also because he wanted to enjoy to the full the good things in the city of Constantine, he spent two years within it.[7] Then, having with difficulty managed to prepare triremes and assembled the strongest army he could, he

set out against the east. He anchored at the port of Lampsakos just at the time when the emperor John was returning from his battle against the caesar Gabalas, whom he fought because of a rebellion.[8]

§27 *Akrop. presents Latin affairs from the time of Robert of Courtenay's death (1228) until the arrival of John of Brienne in Constantinople (1231) and his first expedition against the emperor John III (1233). The narrative of this expedition is continued in §30. Much of Akrop.'s account in this section is characterized by long, awkward sentence structure (see §27.7) which may be a sign that he is paraphrasing a text. The 1229 agreement between John and the Latin barons in Constantinople confirms Akrop.'s account exactly. See Langdon,* Imperial offensive, *36–7, for another view. For Akrop.'s sources, see the Introduction, 38–9. Akrop. introduces himself into the narrative here for the first time (see at §27.5). He was in Constantinople when John of Brienne arrived in 1231. Akrop.'s only reference to John III's expeditions to the islands comes at the end of the section and is continued in §28. See the Introduction, 100–1. The date for the expedition to Rhodes, 1233, is known from the chronological context in which it is mentioned.*

[1] Robert (see §14, §18) died in the Peloponnese, and not on Euboia (Euripos) in 1228, on his return to Constantinople from the west. On this, and the reason for his departure from Constantinople, see Ernoul, 394–5; Dandolo, 291; Baudoin d'Avesnes, 42; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 167–8. For Euripos or Egripos, the name for the island and its capital taken from the strait between the island and the mainland, see Koder, *Negroponte*, 63.

[2] Baldwin II (b. 1217–c. 1273; emperor 1228–61), son of Iolanda of Hainaut and Peter II of Courtenay (see §14, §13, §15), was the only Latin emperor of Constantinople born in that city. On his seals he is a *porphyrogennetos*: Schlumberger, *La sigillographie de l'Orient latin*, 169–72; Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I, no. 114, p. 104. He would have been 11 years old when his brother died. See Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 178–86.

[3] John of Brienne, titular king of Jerusalem (1210–25) through his wife, Marie of Montferrat, daughter of Isabelle and Conrad of Montferrat, was renowned for his military prowess and his stature: see §27.4. He was elected emperor of the Latin empire in 1229, ruling as emperor from 1231–7. See Auvray, *Registres*, no. 290, cols 175–6; see the letter of pope Gregory IX, describing the election, incorporated in a letter of Henry, archbishop of Reims to his suffragan bishops: van den Gheyn, 'Lettre de Grégoire IX concernant l'empire latin de Constantinople', 230–4. The agreement of 1229 between John and the barons in Constantinople confirms Akrop.'s account exactly: Baldwin was to marry John's daughter (Maria: Aubry, 933.35–6), while John was to rule as emperor for his entire life and to have full power

during his lifetime. Only after John's death was Baldwin to rule as emperor. The emphasis on John's sole rule in the agreement (*et plenarium habebit potestatem et plenarium dominium, tanquam imperator, ad totam vitam suam*) is reflected in Akrop.'s remark that John was to 'rule as monarch': TTh II, 265–70, esp. 267; Auvray, *Registres* I, no. 290, cols 175–6; Aubry, 933.34–6. This stipulation shows John's attempt to prevent being displaced by his future son-in-law Baldwin, as he had already by Frederick II when the latter married John's daughter Isabelle: Ernoul, 450–3.

[4] This is Akrop.'s formula for a brave man and good soldier. See also at §37.11 (γενναῖος τὴν χεῖρα); §71 (ἰσχυρός τὴν χεῖρα).

[5] I have adopted Bases' suggestion (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxvii) to delete μῆκος at Heis. 44.23. Akrop. introduces himself into the narrative here for the first time. On Akrop.'s references to himself in his work, see the Introduction, 44–6. He was 14 when John of Brienne arrived in Constantinople in 1231 (see §29). His estimation of John's age has been shown to be greatly inflated. John of Brienne was approximately 20 years younger: Buckley, 'The problematic octogenarianism of John of Brienne', 315–22. However, Akrop.'s description of John's size and stature is confirmed by Salimbene (I, §59, §60): *magnus et grossus et longus statura* (§59, p. 62.20–1).

[6] Although an agreement was reached between John of Brienne and the Latin barons of Constantinople in 1229 (TTh II, 265–70), John did not arrive in Constantinople until 1231, sailing from Venice in Venetian ships: Richard of San Germano, 175; Ernoul, 471–2; Dandolo, *Chronica*, 292.25–8. The agreement between John and the Venetians (TTh II, 290–7, esp. 293–4) mentions passage for 5000 foot soldiers, 500 mounted knights and 1200 horses. The reason Akrop. gives for the sea journey is not corroborated by western sources. Below (§37), he claims that the Latins did not have the means to finance a sea journey.

[7] John of Brienne's 1229 agreement with the barons of Constantinople contained provisions concerning the reconquest of lands in Asia Minor or in Thrace: TTh II, 267–8; see Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 660. His 1231 agreement with the Venetians provided for the transportation of his army to Constantinople or to the territory of John III (*in terram Vatacij*): TTh II, 293, 295–6. From these provisions it is clear that fighting John III was a priority for the Latins in Constantinople. It is to this that Akrop. is referring when he speaks of the 'undertaking' and 'the task'. In the event, John of Brienne did not leave on the expedition against the emperor John until 1233 (see §29 for the date). Aubry (933.34) describes his attempts to acquire land from the Greeks as '*tepide*', 'lukewarm'. Mouskes (29031–4; 29246–9) claims that John of Brienne held back because he was miserly: '*là ot esté ne sai qans ans*... *son or garda et ses deniers*'.

The passage (Heis. 45.6–14) in which Akrop. reports John of Brienne's reply to the Latins who urged him to fight Vatatzes is convoluted. It reads as if it were a paraphrase of a source. See the Introduction, 38–9, on Akrop.'s sources for the Latins in Constantinople. Cf. Langdon, *Imperial offensive*, 36–7, who suggests that the passage is obscure because it was revised by Akrop. to delete references to John III's military actions against the Turks.

[8] An account of the 'battle against the caesar (Leo) Gabalas' is given at §28. It does not appear that the emperor John himself took part in that expedition. At the time of John of Brienne's arrival at Lampsakos, John III 'was returning' to Lampsakos from Stadeia from where he had dispatched his men to Rhodes.

28. So, then, the emperor, encamping in the area of Stadeia,[1] gave to Andronikos Palaiologos (whom he had as *megas domestikos* and about whom I spoke a little earlier)[2] the troops and their generals and dispatched him to the island of Rhodes with a sufficient number of triremes and other ships so that he might attack the renegade[3] with greater strength and inflict damage on him with those methods of strategy he knew. When these things had taken place in this manner, and the affair concerning the caesar had gone according to the emperor John's intention, he heard also that the king had left the city of Constantine and planned to sail to Lampsakos, to disembark there and fight the Romans.[4] The emperor left for Lampsakos with those men with whom he happened to be—these were few, since most of the army had gone home, worn out by battle and the winter season—and he encamped in the area of Sigrene.[5]

§28 *John III sent troops to Rhodes before John of Brienne arrived in Lampsakos in the winter of 1233. See §27.7. Blem., who was on the island at the time, stopping over on his way to Jerusalem, mentions that it was 'early autumn':* Autobiographia *II, §21 (p. 55.7). He describes the expedition in greater detail than Akrop. and also provides a different point of view with regard to Gabalas (II, §20–3). For the differences in their accounts, see the Introduction, 50.*

[1] On the Knidian peninsula, opposite Rhodes: Pach. II, 405.2–3; Hasluck, 'Datcha-Stadia-Halikarnassos', 211–12.

[2] This is Akrop.'s first mention of Andronikos Palaiologos, the father of the future emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos. See Cheynet and Vannier, *Etudes prosopographiques*, no. 32, pp 176–8, and below, §46.2–4, 6. Greg. (I, 69.10–12) says that Andronikos was appointed *megas domestikos* by the emperor Theodore I Laskaris. Akrop. shows that he kept the title and the function of commander of armies until his death. See the Introduction, 60.

[3] Akrop. uses the word 'rebellion' (§27) and 'renegade' (ἀποστάτης: Heis. p. 46.2) (also of Michael II of Epiros: §49.6, §68.3) to explain the cause of the

emperor John III's expedition against the caesar (Leo: §48) Gabalas, implying an act of aggression on Gabalas' part. Blem., however, states that the emperor was angered by Gabalas' independence, even though 'it was the caesar's [right] to rule not from the [imperial] power but [it was] a patrimony which came to him by succession from his ancestors and it did not apply to him to be subordinate to the [imperial] power': *Autobiographia* II, §23. According to Blem., Gabalas ruled over Rhodes and a great number of other islands; the Cyclades are named in an agreement with the Venetians (TTh II, 319–22, here 320).

It is not possible to ascertain how long Gabalas had exercised independent control of the island. Rhodes is not listed in the *Partitio*; it had already seceded from central control by 1203 (Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 18). Chon. (639.76) lists Rhodes as a part of the empire which had an independent ruler in 1204 but he does not name the ruler. See Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, no. 214, p. 150–1. It is possible that John III had intervened earlier and brought the island under his control (Greg. I, 29.3 mentions Rhodes as one of John's acquisitions, in a passage which is difficult to date) but that Gabalas had continued to exercise independence and had therefore provoked the intervention of 1233. This interpretation of events is supported by Akrop.'s use of 'renegade' to describe Leo: see the Introduction, 41–2.

Also unknown is the origin of Leo's title of 'caesar', attested in documents and on coins. If the emperor John or Theodore I had given it to him, Akrop.'s description of a 'rebellion' would be clearer. Gabalas' coins bear the legend 'caesar' and 'servant of the emperor', although Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 648–50, sees the latter as 'formulaic'. If, however, Gabalas had been on the island since 1203, the title could have been bestowed on him by the Angeloi. Chon. (566.23–5) says that they gave high titles freely, including that of caesar.

Akrop. is vague about the outcome of the expedition. According to Blem., the emperor's men were to 'arrest the Governor and fetch him . . . and relieve him of his power' (Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 106). Gabalas' loyalty does not appear to have been secured immediately, for in 1234 he signed a treaty with the Venetians, providing for mutual aid: TTh II, 319–22. In 1235, however, he was fighting on the side of the emperor John III against the Latins: Martino da Canale, 362–4; Dandolo, 295; *Venetiarum Historia*, 156–7. Gabalas had died by 1248 when the Genoese attacked the island and his brother John was ruling there, under Nicaean authority: see §48. For earlier members of the Gabalas family, see Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, no. 214, p. 150–1.

[4] See §27.

[5] For Sigrene, between Lampsakos and Pegai, see §41.

29. It was at that time also that I was sent by my parents from the city of Constantine to the emperor. I was 16[1] and had just finished my all-round education which people call 'grammar'.[2] My father wanted to slip away secretly from the hands of the Latins, for he was very much in their power because of the profusion of expenses and also their liberalities, and the large staff which he had around him, children and servants, male and female, was no small impediment to him.[3] But he had it in mind at that time that, should he have the means, if necessary he would risk his departure, and accomplish his aim. That is why he sent me ahead to the ruler. But a serious illness hindered him: he became nearly half-dead and half-withered.[4] Having been bedridden[5] for around two years, he left life behind, while I was left behind in the palace,[6] deemed worthy of imperial care.

§29 *Akrop. explains how he came to the 'empire of Nicaea'. He inserts this information, precisely, at the chronologically correct place, 1233. See the Introduction, 6–7, for Akrop.'s family and Constantinopolitan origin.*

[1] If he was 16 in 1233, he was born in 1217. See §39, where he makes another reference to his age.

[2] Akrop. had just finished his secondary education, the ἐγκύκλιος παίδευσις (Heis. 46.13) or 'all-round education' which was called 'grammar'. This included the Trivium (grammar, rhetoric, philosophy) and the Quadrivium (arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy). See Moffatt, 'Early Byzantine school curricula and a liberal education', 275–88; Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 330. It is not known who was teaching, where, in Constantinople under the Latin occupation. See the Introduction, 8 and n. 26.

[3] Akrop. presents his father as a man with a large household, many expenses and obligations. It is not known who Akrop.'s father was or what position he held in Constantinople under the Latins. See the Introduction, 7. Lock, *The Franks*, 48, suggests that George's father was a fiscal clerk. Akrop.'s description in this passage does not support this view. The word δεξίωσις (Heis. 46.18) which I have translated as 'liberalities' is used also below (Heis. 65.17: §40), and is found in *Timarion* (ed. Romano, 50.35–6) and Mesarites (ed. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' III, 21.23) in contexts which make it possible to understand by it 'feasts' or 'receptions'. But see Greg. I, 37.5–6: δωρεαῖς . . . καὶ δεξιώσεσιν ἄλλαις; also Heis., 'Index verborum', *Opera* I, 317.

[4] ἡμίξηρος, 'half-withered', is, according to M. Chon., a term used by doctors, and synonymous with ἡμιθνής, 'half-dead'. For the interchangeability of the terms, see M. Chon. (ed. Lampros, II, 355.22; also 357.16–17; ed. Kolovou, 285.54–5, 287.26); also David (sixth century), *Prolegomena Philosophiae in Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca*, XVIII, ed. A. Busse (Berlin,

1900), 32.30–33.1. The condition which the terms describe is a paralysis: see John Chrysostom, 'Fragments on Jeremiah', PG 64.929. Theodore II complains also of being 'half-dead': *Epistulae*, 109.8. See the Introduction, 47, for Akrop.'s medical knowledge.

[5] For this expression, literally 'nailed to the bed', see also §44.3.

[6] Akrop. shows great variety in his expressions for death. See the Introduction, 52 n. 320.

30. As we said, when king John, who was also known as emperor of Constantinople, arrived at Lampsakos, he anchored his ships near the place which is actually called Holkos.[1] But since the emperor John did not have with him an army sufficient in strength to hinder him from marching out (for the reasons which I mentioned), he hindered the movements of the enemy by strategic means, with the few men he had. So then the Latins and their king John went forth and they marched along some coastal places: for they were not able to go further away from their ships since the emperor, making moves against them, followed close upon them, and was skilful at holding back the enemy with a very small force. So the emperor took a route along the foot of the hills, the Italians along the shore. After they had passed a short time on the emperor's coastal land—four months had not yet passed—and had covered a small area—from Lampsakos they got as far as Kenchreai[2]—causing little or no destruction (for the emperor had managed to preserve all the necessities safe in higher places), they withdrew to the town of Pegai, having captured only one fortress which is called Keramidas[3] and is situated near the mountains of Kyzikos.[4] They had their ships ready to sail back to the city of Constantine, and they might have departed filled with shame and loss, if they had not overcome the town of Pegai by stealth.[5] For one man, skilful at clambering up to the ridges of rocks, found a path by which he brought armed Latins up to the citadel at night. These men suddenly attacked the guards, killed them, and took the town. This plunged the Romans into cowardice for a short time, for the city was full of brave and worthy men who were among the most distinguished of soldiers. But the emperor's resourcefulness in these matters and strategic shrewdness at that time shook the Romans out of their cowardice and struck terror, rather, into the Latins, and checked their natural inclination and the impetus which had arisen in them from their conquest of their [the Romans'] possessions. And so they returned to the city of Constantine, having accomplished little, or nothing, as we said.

§30 *Akrop. here resumes the narrative of §27. His is the only narrative of this campaign. For the date, 1233, see §27.*

[1] See §22.10 for Holkos and the expression 'the place which is actually called . . .'

[2] Kenchreai is, according to Pach. (II, 613.6–8), a fortress near the Skamander river, to the west of Lampsakos. See Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 162.

[3] Located on the Arctonnesos (Kapu Dağ) peninsula, north of Artaki, 'on a lofty spur of mountains': Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 19.

[4] Kyzikos, on the narrow strip of land connecting the Arctonnesos peninsula with Asia Minor, was ceded to the emperor Theodore I in 1207 by the Latin emperor Henry: Vill. §487, §489.

[5] The Latins had ceded Pegai, their last possession in northwestern Asia Minor, to the emperor John III in 1225: §24.1. For mentions of John of Brienne's conquest of Pegai, see Aubry, 933.34–6, and *L'Estoire de Eracles Empereur*, 382: *et non mie par force ainz fu emblé* ('by stealth').

31. As the emperor John was skilful at finding means both to preserve his own in difficult times (about this more discussion is needed), and also to restrain the adversary, so that his own affairs might be strengthened by both means, he found a way to accomplish the two things. For a son had been born to him by the empress Eirene, to whom the name of his grandfather, the emperor Theodore Laskaris, had been given. He was then in his eleventh year.[1] Asan also had a little daughter—Helen was her name—born to him by his Hungarian wife.[2] She was in her ninth year. So the emperor sent an embassy to the ruler of the Bulgarians, Asan, and he made mention of betrothal of the children and of marriage-kinship for both parties, and of military alliance for one another and solidarity.[3] And Asan accepted the embassy, and agreements were completed and oaths produced to this effect.

§31 *Akrop. begins here an account of the negotiations to establish a military and a kin alliance between John III and Asan (1232: see §31.1). Akrop.'s emphasis on the two goals of the emperor John III is underlined by his use of the dual twice in the first sentence (Heis. 48.18, 19). He continues the account at §33, without indicating that a lapse of time has occurred; on the contrary, he implies that it has not. However, the actual 'betrothal' (μνηστεία: Heis. 49.1) and the establishment of the autonomous patriarchate of Trnovo which took place at the same time (§33) cannot have occurred before 1234. Christopher of Ankyra, the exarch sent to the west by the patriarch Germanos II, writing to Asan in 1233, refers to the ordination of the newly appointed archbishop of Trnovo to be performed either by the patriarch Germanos or by him (Kurtz, 'Christophoros von Ankyra als Exarch', 130, 142.40–53). Thus, the patriarchate had not yet been established (Dölger-Wirth,* Regesten, *no. 1745, p. 26). Yet, Akrop. states that the negotiations and the betrothal took place when Theodore II was 11 (§31, §34). As it has been established that Theodore was born in 1221 (see §52.24), he would have been 11*

*in 1232, the date the negotiations began, according to Akrop. See Dölger-Wirth (*Regesten, *no. 1730, p. 22) who point out the problem of dating but base their calculations on a date of 1222 for John III's accession, a date which has since been shown to be incorrect. It would seem, then, that the negotiations began in 1232 but that the betrothal and the establishment of the patriarchate of Trnovo were not accomplished until 1235. See §33 for the date. For a detailed discussion of this alliance, see Cankova-Petkova, 'Griechisch-bulgarische Bündnisse', 49–80; Gjuselev, 'Bulgarien und das Kaiserreich von Nikaia (1204–1261)', 143–54.*

[1] If the birth of Theodore II Laskaris coincided with the beginning of his father's reign in 1221, as Akrop. later states (§52.24), the events in this passage took place in 1232. Theodore was the only child of John and Eirene. According to Greg. I, 44.7–12, Eirene was unable to have more children because of a riding accident.

[2] Asan's wife, Maria, was the sister of Bela, king of Hungary: Aubry, 950.12–13. See also below, §33, §36. She was his second wife: see Georgieva, 'Diplomatic marriages in medieval Bulgarian foreign policy', 116–26, here 124–5.

[3] Unlike Akrop., Greg. (I, 29.15–24) and Andrea Dandolo (*Chronica*, 295.1–2) attribute the initiative to Asan. See Cankova-Petkova, 'Griechisch-bulgarische Bündnisse', 56, who reconciles the discrepancy in the sources by suggesting stages in the negotiations which Akrop. has not mentioned.

32. It was at that time too[1] that I, captivated by love of philosophy and higher education in literature, said farewell to everything else by will of the ruler, along with other young men,[2] and presented myself at the door of instruction in philosophical studies. Our instructor was Theodore Hexapterygos. When we assembled before the emperor, directing his words towards me, the emperor said,

> These I have taken from Nicaea and handed over to the school but you I have sent forth from my household and released with them to be taught. Demonstrate, then, that you indeed go forth from my household, and engage in your studies accordingly. For if you were to become a soldier by occupation, you would have so much from my Majesty by way of a living and perhaps a little more because of your illustrious family.[3] But if you should prove to be steeped in philosophy, you will be deemed worthy of great honours and rewards. For, alone of all people, the emperor and the philosopher[4] are most celebrated.

Thus, departing from the palace, and going to the teacher, I committed myself; I was in my 17th year. He was, as I said, Hexapterygos,[5] a man not very learned in philosophy but good at declaiming, since he had dwelt extensively on

rhetorical studies and had studied skilful expression and had acquired a great reputation because of this. When he died, after he had elucidated poetry for us and had taught the art of words, I, and those who with me were accomplishing their education in philosophical studies, went to Nikephoros Blemmydes,[6] whom we all knew to be more accomplished[7] than others at that time in the philosophical sciences. So much now for the narrative concerning us. Hereafter it will be inserted into the history wherever it is appropriate.[8]

§32 *Akrop. interrupts his report of the events of 1234 to insert an account of his education at the chronologically correct point in the narrative. See the Introduction, 42, and §32.8. Here and at §39 he refers to his education at the court of John III. It is clear from the speech he puts in the mouth of the emperor John—'you I have sent forth from my household'—and also from the phrase, 'departing from the palace', that Akrop. was brought up at court, in the emperor's household. See the Introduction, 8, 18–19. The entire section concerns higher education in philosophy which is expressed in Greek variously by μαθημάτων, λόγων παιδεύσεως, λογικῶν παιδευμάτων (Heis. 49.6, 7, 9).*

[1] 1234: see §29 where Akrop. says he was 16 when his father sent him to 'Nicaea' (in 1233). See below §32.6 for his age.

[2] The class consisted of five young men, two of whom, Romanos and Krateros, are mentioned by name by Blem. in his account of his teaching experience. This seems to have been a celebrated class, judging by the number of references to the five. See Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §49; *Epistulae*, 325–9, here 328.90–4; Theodore II's encomium for Akrop., *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 103.187–92. For education at Nicaea, see the Introduction, 8–9.

[3] For Akrop.'s 'illustrious family', see the Introduction, 6–7.

[4] The emperor's 'speech', addressed to Akrop., underlines the significance of philosophy. The passage also shows the influence of Blem. on Akrop. The introduction to Blem.'s *Epitome logike* (PG 142.688–9CD), written for students at the emperor John's request, discusses the relationship of the imperial majesty and philosophy, as does Blem.'s 'Imperial statue' (ed. Hunger and Ševčenko, I, 6–7, pp 45–6). Akrop.'s funeral oration for the emperor likewise plays on the idea of a philosopher king, with reference to John III's son, Theodore II: *Opera* II, 27.25–28.6.

[5] Theodore Hexapterygos is known also from an unpublished lead seal in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (acquisition no. 58.106.4608). His name perhaps derives from the monastery *ton Hexapterygon* (Seraphim) in Prousa: Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 148. For other members of this family, see Constantinides, *Higher education*, 10 n. 28. Hexapterygos is likewise known from a thirteenth-century manuscript which contains six *diegemata* by him, model texts for teaching rhetoric. See Hörandner, 'Die Progymnasmata des

Theodoros Hexapterygos', 147–62. Hörandner asserts, on the basis of the *diegemata*, that Akrop.'s judgement of the author's writing skills is apt.

[6] Akrop. studied with Hexapterygos for four to five years (1234–1238/9). See below, §39, where he states that, in 1239, he had just begun to study with Blem.: *ἄρτι. . .ἡψάμην*: Heis. 63.5. This date is corroborated by Blem.'s *Epitome logike* which he says was written at the request of the emperor John III for students, when he was young: PG 142, 688C–1004A, here 688C–689C. For 1238 as the date of its composition, see Uthemann, 'Zur Sprachtheorie des Nikephoros Blemmydes', 128. Blem. himself refers to his instruction of five young men in *logike* in his *Autobiographia* (I, §§49–54) and in a letter to the patriarch in which he refused to take on more students because of his bad experience with two of the five (*Epistulae*, 327–8). For Blem., see below §53. For Blem.'s influence on Akrop., see the Introduction, 46–51. Gregory of Cyprus, who went to study with Blem. in Ephesos in 1259, says of him, 'a man, it was said, who was . . . the wisest of all men': ed. Lameere, 181.12–14; Constantinides, *Higher education*, 25.

[7] Akrop. plays on the words *τελεώτερον* (Heis. 50.5), 'more accomplished' and *ἐτελοῦντο* (Heis. 50.6), from *τελεόω*, 'bring to fulfilment, accomplish': *ἡ τελειοτέρα μάθησις* refers to higher education: Nicholas Mesarites, *Epitaphios*, ed. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen' I, 33.6: *παιδείαν . . . τελεώτατα*; *Epistulae*, 75.89–91: *τὸ τέλος τῆς ῥητορικῆς*.

[8] Akrop. consistently inserts information at the chronologically correct point: see the Introduction, 42.

33. As I said before,[1] when the treaty of cooperation had been made[2] by both emperors, I mean the emperor John Doukas and the ruler of the Bulgarians, John Asan, the emperor arrived at Lampsakos first and crossed over to Kallipolis with his own forces and, after having set up siege towers, made war on the town and conquered it in a short time, recovering it from the hands of the Venetians.[3] After this Asan too arrived at Kallipolis with his wife, Maria of the Hungarians,[4] and his daughter Helen,[5] and he met the emperor at Kallipolis and both men acted according to the conventions of friendship. Asan, however, did not cross the Hellespont but remained in the region of Kallipolis. The emperor John took Asan's wife and daughter Helen, and made the crossing to Lampsakos, where the empress Eirene was, and they concluded the union of the children with the patriarch Germanos officiating at the holy service.[6] It was at that time too that the bishop of Trnovo, who was subject to the patriarch of Constantinople, was honoured with independence and it was decided by imperial and synodal decree that he be proclaimed patriarch, favours bestowed by the leading men on the ruler of the Bulgarians, Asan, because of the marriage connection and the friendship.[7]

When all that relates to such matters had been accomplished, the empress Eirene, taking her son and his bride, lived with them in the eastern territories;[8] in like manner, Asan's wife returned to her own regions. But the emperor John and Asan, taking their forces with them, both overran as much of the western territory as was subject to the Latins. They took much booty, reducing everything to a 'Scythian desert', as the saying goes,[9] and they divided the towns and territory between them, in accordance with their oaths.[10] Since Kallipolis had been captured by the emperor before his meeting with Asan, it became subject to the emperor; likewise Madyta and the whole of the place which is called Chersonesos.[11] The emperor also took the fortress of Kissos[12] and set his boundaries up to the river which the people call the Maritza. In addition, he got possession of the Ganos[13] mountain on which he built a fortress; he dispatched Nicholas Kotertzes[14] there to guard it and to cause trouble for the Latins who were in Tzouroulos.[15] The man [Kotertzes] had been tested by many wars and was so highly esteemed that everyone was of the opinion that there never had been and never would be anyone who had undertaken such feats or had accomplished so much. Asan, for his part, had subject to him the places beyond the forementioned lands and facing towards the north. Both men went as far as the very walls of the city of Constantine, while king John took his position on them and watched, and they struck great terror into the Latins and constricted their affairs.[16] But since the autumn season was passing and winter approaching, the emperor John and Asan took leave of each other; the latter departed for his own land of the Bulgarians, while the emperor crossed over to the east.

§33 *Akrop. continues here, as if no time has passed, the account of §31 concerning the alliance between John III and John Asan. See §31 for a discussion of the dating problem. The events described in §33, the betrothal (see §33.6) and the bestowal of independence on the patriarch of Trnovo, date to no earlier than 1234 and are followed by a joint expedition in Thrace and against Constantinople which dates to 1235: see §33.10, 16.*

[1] Akrop. resumes the narrative of §31 which he interrupted in order to insert his account of his education in the correct chronological place.

[2] For the date of the agreement, 1234, see above, §31. See the letter of Gregory IX to Bela of Hungary (December 1235): Auvray, *Registres* II, no. 2872, cols 217–18.

[3] Kallipolis (Gallipoli), on the Hellespont opposite Lampsakos, had been awarded to the Venetians in the *Partitio* (ed. Carile, 219.42; 252–3). The emperor John had plundered it, along with Madyta and other cities along the coast, in the early 1220s: see §22, and below §33.11. See Theiner, *Vetera*

monumenta I, no. 249, pp 140–1 (*anno* 1235) for pope Gregory IX's letter to Bela of Hungary in which he describes John III's conquest of Kallipolis as brutal; also Greg. I, 29.9–15.

[4] The daughter of Andrew II of Hungary and sister of Bela: see §36.5; Mouskes, 23064–8.

[5] Asan had offered a daughter (unnamed) to Baldwin II in marriage. The offer was rejected: Dandolo, 292.

[6] It seems that 'the union' is a betrothal (§31: μνηστεία), although at §34 Akrop. refers to their union as marriage: 'the communion of marriage'. For the date of the betrothal, 1234/5, see §31 (Introductory Note). The patriarch Germanos II (1223–40) was the successor of Manuel (§19): Laurent, 'La chronologie', 136–7; Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465CD.

[7] The establishment of the patriarchate of Trnovo is dated to 1235: Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1282, pp 88–9; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, nos 1730, 1745, 1746, pp 26–7. Asan's uncle, John (Kalojan), had negotiated with pope Innocent III as early as 1199 concerning the raising of the bishop of Trnovo to the status of patriarch but the pope recognized him only as primate. See Wolff, 'The "Second Bulgarian Empire" ', 190–8; Tarnanidis, 'Byzantine–Bulgarian ecclesiastical relations', 28–52. The 'imperial and synodal decree' does not survive but is mentioned in an account appended to the *Synodikon* of Boril which claims that Trnovo was to be equal to the other patriarchates: ed. Popruzhenko, 84–7. However, a statement of the patriarch Germanos, cited in an act of the patriarch Kallistos (1355), describes the rights and obligations of Trnovo and shows that the patriarch did not consider the see to be completely autocephalous; the patriarch of Trnovo was to pay taxes to the church of Constantinople and to commemorate the patriarch of Constantinople in services, as did (other) metropolitan sees under Constantinople: MM I, 438.226–439.19; Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1285, p. 93. See Podskalsky, *Theologische Literatur*, 78–9, 248–9, 297. Skout. (478.22–4=*Additamenta*, no. 24, p. 283) makes it clear that this favour was bestowed on Asan in return for his promise to help the emperor John free Constantinople from the Latins. The name of the first patriarch of Trnovo, Ioakim, is known from the *Synodikon* of Boril (ed. Popruzhenko, 86–7). For him, see also §36.

[8] See §34.3.

[9] *CPG* II, p. 208, p. 643. See also §35.3.

[10] The joint campaign described here, to the end of §33, dates to 1235–6. See below, §33.16. Greg. (I, 30.6–12) does not mention Asan's participation.

[11] The emperor John III had plundered the area of the Thracian Chersonese (Pauly-Wissowa, *RE* III, 2242), including Madyta, in 1224: see §22. For Kallipolis, see above, §33.3.

[12] For Kissos, to the east of the mouth of the Maritza (Hebros) river, see Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 242.

[13] The Ganos mountain is to the north of the town by the same name (modern Gaziköy) on the coast of the Propontis: *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 250; *Epistulae*, 12.40.

[14] Nicholas Kotertzes is not known from any other source although other members of the family are attested for the eleventh, twelfth and fourteenth centuries, always in a military context. For a Kotertzes Tornikios at Manzikert see Skyl. continuatus, *Ἡ συνέχεια τῆς χρονογραφίας τοῦ Ἰωάννου Σκυλίτση*, ed. E. Th. Tsolakes (Thessalonike, 1968), 147.2; also, Kinn. 49.22–3; 53.5; Pach. IV, 447.25–449.6; *PLP*, fasc. 6, 13329.

[15] Tzouroulos (modern Çorlu), in eastern Thrace, had been awarded to the Latin emperor by the *Partitio* (ed. Carile, 233); Vill. §337, §390. See below, §36.

[16] Akrop. does not dwell on the joint attack on Constantinople in the summer–autumn of 1235–6. He gives the impression of a single assault and of a passive John of Brienne. Western sources describe a campaign which took place over a long period of time and combined land and sea attacks. On the campaign see Langdon, 'The forgotten Byzantino-Bulgarian assault and siege of Constantinople, 1235–1236', 105–35. For Akrop.'s presentation, see the Introduction, 89, 100.

34. Since his son Theodore was not yet of age (for he had completed his eleventh year,[1] as we said, when he was joined to the empress Helen[2] in the communion of marriage), the union remained unconsummated, but they were raised and educated by the empress Eirene[3] as she had a good nature and was of a kindly disposition. The affairs of the Latins were reduced a great deal at that time,[4] and so their spirit was very much humbled by the marriage connection of the two monarchs. King John died a short time later,[5] leaving control over Constantinople to his son-in-law Baldwin as an inheritance. Asan, regretting his treaty with the emperor John, it seems, sought a way to separate his daughter from her husband the emperor Theodore[6] and to marry her to another. For he very much feared the advancement of the Romans,[7] since the people he ruled had been subject to the Romans of old. He thought of an excuse which seemed reasonable (although it did not fool those who knew the circumstances) and he sent ambassadors to the emperor and empress, saying that since he would be near the city of Hadrian both he and his wife wished to see their little daughter, give her a paternal embrace, perform the customary duties and send her back to her father-in-law and her husband again. Then, although the emperor John and the empress Eirene saw through the act completely and clearly recognized the trick, they sent to Asan his daughter, saying this, that if he should detain his daughter and

deprive her of her legally wedded husband, there is a God who observes everything and visits punishment on those who transgress oaths and dissolve treaties which they have entered upon with God as a witness. However, the Bulgarian, taking his daughter, left, making all those attending her hasten back and, crossing the Haimos, he proceeded towards Trnovo, with his daughter crying and lamenting all the while and greatly bewailing the separation from her mother-in-law, the empress Eirene, and her husband. Whereupon, they say, Asan took her and sat her in front of him on his saddle, hitting her on the temples with his fingers and threatening her violently that if she did not conduct herself quietly, he would do to her whatever he wished.

§34 *Akrop. resumes his account of Theodore II and Helen which he began at §33. The separation of Helen from Theodore by Asan is dated to 1237 by reference to the death of 'king John', John of Brienne: see §34.5. By 1237 Asan had allied with the Latins. See §36.1.*

Akrop. describes in detail Asan's behaviour and treatment of his daughter. In this he chooses to emphasize the perceptiveness of John III and Eirene and Helen's fondness for her new home and relations. For the reconciliation of Asan and John III, see §36. The references in this passage to the 'empress Helen' and the 'emperor Theodore' are the first indication Akrop. gives that Theodore had indeed been made co-emperor in his father's lifetime. It was perhaps at the time of his betrothal that he was made co-emperor. See §40.19, §44.5 and the Introduction, 39–40. In this passage, too, Asan is called an autokrator *('monarch'). See the Introduction, 41.*

[1] See at §31 for a discussion of the date of the betrothal.

[2] See §34.6.

[3] The canonical age for betrothal was 14 for boys and 12 for girls, whereas Theodore and Helen were 11 and 9. See Zachariä von Lingenthal, *Geschichte des griechisch-römischen Rechts*, 75. The practice of raising and educating the underage child in the home of one of the in-laws is attested for both imperial and non-imperial marriages. See Macrides, 'Dynastic marriages and political kinship', 275.

[4] A Franciscan source describes the condition of Constantinople and its inhabitants at this time: *terra Constantinopolis quasi destituta fuit omni presidio; dominus Imperator Ioannes pauper erat*: Golubovich, 'Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum', 446.

[5] March 1237: Richard of San Germano, 194; Aubry, 941; Wolff, 'The Latin empire of Constantinople and the Franciscans', 216. On Baldwin II, see §33.

[6] For Theodore as co-emperor, see also at §40.19, and the Introduction, 39–40.

[7] Akrop. refers to the breakdown in relations between Asan and John III after the death of John of Brienne (1237). This was the first of several changes of alliance for Asan in the 1230s: see §36–7. Although Akrop. (and Skout. 479.23–30) give no explicit reason for Asan's behaviour, letters of pope Gregory IX show that the pope was putting pressure on Asan to break off his alliance with John III: Auvray, *Registres* II, no. 3156, col. 391 (*anno* 1236); no. 3694, col. 660 (*anno* 1237). See Langdon, 'The forgotten Byzantino-Bulgarian assault and siege of Constantinople, 1235–1236', 118; Spence, 'Gregory IX's attempted expeditions to the Latin empire of Constantinople', 163–76. However, Gjuselev, 'Bulgarien und das Kaiserreich von Nikaia', 150, argues that Asan sought to take advantage of a posited weakness of Nicaean power brought about by the Cuman invasion of Thrace: see §35.

35. It was about that time also that the Scythian race, all those who had escaped the sword of the Tatars who had overrun them, crossed the Ister on skin bags and passed over the Haimos together with children and wives and, although the Bulgarians were unwilling—for there were many thousands of them—they occupied the lands of Macedonia.[1] Some made their grazing grounds the Hebros region and the plains there; others, the lower regions and the river which, as we said, the indiscriminately babbling tongue calls the Maritza. (It is really the Hebros which runs as far as Ainos and there flows into the Aegean Sea, but since other rivers also flow into it and enlarge it, it is known by a different name to the people who dwell near it.)[2] At all events, they plundered everything in Macedonia and in a short time stripped the inhabitants bare of their possessions, and created a 'Scythian desert', to quote the proverb,[3] and took those fortresses which are easily overcome in battle. Many were killed, all were despoiled, taken captive, and sold in the large towns such as Adrianople, Didymoteichon, Bizye,[4] Kallipolis[5] and in any other place fortified by strong walls and secured by the multitude of its inhabitants.

§35 *Akrop. gives an account of the Cumans' flight from the Tatars over the Danube into 'Macedonia'. The description constitutes the only 'ethnographic' excursus of Akrop.'s* History. *See the Introduction, 47 and n. 277. Chon. (94.80–92) describes how the Cumans fill skins with straw, tie them to the horse's tail, and straddle them to cross the river.*

[1] The Tatar invasion and the Cuman (Scythian) movement south across the Haimos (modern Stara Planina), or 'Balkan', mountains and the Danube (Ister) river can be dated to c. 1237 on the basis of its position here in

the sequence of events. The Cumans occupied the theme of Macedonia or present-day Thrace which included Adrianople and Philippopolis (see §13). For Akrop.'s use of 'Haimos', see above at §11.7. The Cumans were settled in Asia Minor by John III by 1241: see §40.5.

[2] In this passage, Akrop. distinguishes between the upper and lower courses of the same river which he calls Hebros and Maritza respectively. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 13–14. Skout. (480.18–19) makes the distinction in name even more clearly. However, Akrop. is not consistent. See §24 where he uses the name Hebros with reference to the lower region near the mouth of the river. Each time that Akrop. mentions the river by the name Maritza, he comments on its (Slavic) origin, saying that this is a popular, local name: §33, §43, §59; see also Pach. IV. 615.12–13. The name first appears in the typikon of the Kosmosoteira monastery (twelfth century): ed. Petit, 66.39; 69.15. For Ainos (Enez), at the mouth of the river, see Soustal, *Thrakien*, 170–3.

[3] *CPG*, II, pp 208, 643.

[4] Chon. (632.18–20) and Vill., §390, likewise attest to the strength of the fortifications of Adrianople, Didymoteichon and Bizye. Adrianople had two sets of fortifications, one for the acropolis–kastron, the other for the lower city. Didymoteichon had a double wall around its kastron and was surrounded by water on three sides. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 132, 141.

[5] For Kallipolis, see §22.11, §33.

36. When, then, these things happened in this way, the Latin race, which always nurtures a passionate hatred for us and was even worse disposed because of the recent attack on them by the emperor John and Asan and because of the loss of their lands and fortresses, was looking for the opportune moment to attack us; they found then[1] the possibility, as they thought, to make good their loss. First they won over Asan, concluding a peace treaty with him.[2] Then, along with him, they drew to themselves the Scyths, barbarian men, vagrants and intruders, and made these accomplices in their deeds, with some small favours but larger promises.[3] And, having assembled this alliance of Scyths and Bulgarians, the Italians proceeded together against the emperor John. Since the town of Tzouroulos was nearly theirs, they raised battle against it, with Asan present in person,[4] with many thousand Scythian and Bulgarian contingents and Italian machines. Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes[5] had received the command of Tzouroulos from the emperor John. He was the emperor's *epi tes trapezes* at that time but was later given the honour of *megas domestikos*; he was the son-in-law of the *megas domestikos* Palaiologos by marriage to his eldest daughter Maria. Tarchaneiotes was both a good soldier and a fine general and profited by God's great succour, as was observed until the end. For it certainly seemed to most people that he accomplished most things by good fortune rather than by overcoming the

enemy by manly spirit and generalship. But it was when they had taken up a position near the town—the Italians had many machines and strong siege towers capable of taking not only a town of this size but also higher walls and larger cities—that the *epi tes trapezes*, together with those with him, brilliantly displayed his brave spirit and strategic skill; yet it was all because of God's succour. Tarchaneiotes fought back from within against the machines without and countered an army of such a great size with the bravery of a very small number of soldiers. The emperor John was in difficulty, not so much because he was in great distress for those in the town, but because he knew, being prudent and shrewd in military matters, that if the town were taken by the enemy, all that was his in the west would be gone. In the meantime, however, he preferred in this matter to distract the enemy and curtail the vehemence of their attack; for his possessions in the east were of more importance to him; it was a greater source of cheer to him that they be free of warfare.[6]

While the town of Tzouroulos was being besieged, unexpectedly a message reached Asan that his wife, the Hungarian woman, had died. At the same time a small child of his died, and the bishop of Trnovo also.[7] Believing these deaths to be a sign of the wrath of God, he destroyed the siege towers with fire and took the road to Trnovo as quickly as he could. The Italians were left behind alone then, but since there were not enough of them to besiege the town, they too abandoned the battle against them and left for the city of Constantine. Thus, the city was released from the enemy siege, as also was Tarchaneiotes, the *epi tes trapezes*, who appeared a victory-bearer in this, in accordance with his name.[8]

But since the forementioned misfortunes had befallen Asan, he thought rather more piously that these things had happened because he had transgressed the oaths he had agreed with the emperor John and because he had separated his daughter from her husband Theodore. Repenting these acts, he sent ambassadors to the emperor, blaming himself for his most evil deed, calling for a renewal of their agreements, and asking forgiveness for what he had done.[9] Since the emperor John and the empress Eirene were inclined to righteousness and holiness, they received the embassy and, without discussing the matter at length, confirmed the oaths again and recalled their daughter-in-law Helen. She was sent to her father-in-law and her husband and there was peace once again between Romans and Bulgarians.

§36 *Akrop. gives an account of the siege at Tzouroulos in 1237 (see §36.4), abandoned by the Latins and their Cuman allies because of Asan's departure from the battle. In 1235 the town was in Latin control when John III made an attempt against it (§33). Akrop. does not say when it came under John III's control*

but this had clearly happened between 1235 and the time of the siege reported here. The Latins regained Tzouroulos in 1240 (see §37.9).

[1] I have adopted Bases' emendation of the text here (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxvii): *τὸ τότε δυνάμενον*.

[2] See above §34.7 and Spence, 'Gregory IX's attempted expeditions to the Latin empire of Constantinople', 170–2.

[3] According to Jean de Joinville (ed. de Wailly, §97, p. 177) the Latin emperor of Constantinople and the nobles allied themselves with the Cumans in blood brotherhood, to gain their support against John III.

[4] This attack on Tzouroulos dates to 1237, since in that year Gregory IX was corresponding with Asan concerning his alliance with the Latins, while by January 1238 he refers to Asan as *perfidus*: Auvray, *Registres* II, no. 3694, col. 660 (May 1237); no. 4056, col. 875 (Jan. 1238); no. 4058, col. 876 (Jan. 1238); no. 4059, col. 876 (Jan. 1238).

[5] On the Tarchaneiotes family, see §23.4. This is Akrop.'s first mention of Nikephoros (see also §40, §49) to whom he gives fulsome praise because of his relationship through marriage to Andronikos Palaiologos, the *megas domestikos* (Pach. I, 93 and n. 13). For the latter, see §28 and the Introduction, 60. Tarchaneiotes was *megas domestikos* in the reign of Michael Palaiologos (Pach. I, 55.19–21; 179.22–5) but may have received the title late in the reign of John III, after the death of Andronikos Palaiologos. See §49; Angold, *Exile*, 183–4; Cheynet and Vannier, *Études prosopographiques*, no. 32, pp 176–8. The date of his marriage to Maria Palaiologina is not known. She was his second wife. His first wife, a daughter of Andronikos Doukas Aprenos, *protostrator*, is known from a marginal note to Pach.'s *History* (cod. Monac. gr. 442): II, 385.17–18, 384, n. 1; Heisenberg, 'Aus der Geschichte', 11.

[6] See discussion of this passage in the Introduction, 55 and n. 332.

[7] Asan's wife, Maria, was the sister of Bela, king of Hungary: Theiner, *Vetera monumenta* I, no. 32, p. 20.3–4 (*anno* 1219); Aubry, 950.12–14. They had at least one other son, Kaliman, who succeeded Asan (see §39), and two daughters, Helen (§31) and Thamar (§39). The 'bishop of Trnovo' was the recently consecrated patriarch Ioachim (see §33).

[8] A play on the name Nikephoros. See also Ephraim, 8280–1.

[9] The reconciliation dates to late 1237. See §36.4. See Auvray, *Registres* II, no. 4056, col. 875; no. 4058, col. 876; no. 4059, col. 876. Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1758, p. 31.

37. The course of the history turns to another road and will make clear events in the city of Constantine. Since at that time affairs were in a fragmented state because rule was shared by many everywhere, the narrative also must twist

along in a complex manner.[1] Now, since Baldwin, who reigned as emperor in the city of Constantine, as my narrative mentioned before, had failed in his battles against the Romans or, rather, in his opposition to the emperor John—for his possessions had been much diminished by the latter—he went abroad[2] to the king of the Franks, who was related to him by blood; as a fellow-countryman, he was, furthermore, a great enemy of the Romans and for this reason ready to assist. He asked him for considerable military aid and was successful in his aim.[3] In a short time 60 000 Franks were assembled with the purpose of marching against the Romans.[4] But, as they could not easily make the voyage by ship, since putting to sea required more resources than they had, they made the journey over land.[5] And so they passed by upper Gaul, through Italy by the skirts of the Alps and came to Ostrikion,[6] and, when they had summoned Hungary to their aid, they crossed the Ister and turned towards the land of the Bulgarians, treating everyone along the way as friends and relations.[7] They were also treated especially kindly by the local rulers, both for their own sake but also, no less, because of the animosity felt towards us. The Bulgarians, overlooking their agreements with the Romans, gave the Franks permission to cross their mountains, supposedly forced by them to let them pass.[8] So, then, the town of Tzouroulos was again captured when the Latins, allied with the Scyths,[9] marched out against them [the Romans]. John Petraliphas was in charge of its garrison—he had been given the dignity of *megas chartoularios*[10] by the emperor John—a man who was brave in arm[11] and experienced in military affairs since childhood. The superiority[12] of the Latin force and the infinite number of Scyths, and the quantity and strength of the siege towers had forced him to surrender the town to the Italians. (But some say that certain people meditated betrayal secretly and that he feared an unforeseen conquest from this source.) Thus, the Latins subdued Tzouroulos and carried off as captives to the city of Constantine the Romans in it, together with Petraliphas, and sold them to their own people.

While the town of Tzouroulos was being besieged by the Italians, the emperor John prepared several triremes[13] and, taking with him not a small army, made an attack on the Italians. Setting off from Nikomedeia, and passing by Charax, he besieged Dakibyza on the spur of the moment and took it, and the fortress of Niketiatou besides, and made this also subject to him.[14] However, at that time he was unlucky with his triremes since the men on board were inexperienced in fighting[15] and Iophre the Armenian,[16] who had the rank of commander among them, was rather hesitant in matters of war. Before him Manuel Kontophre[17] had been granted the command of the triremes, a man who was brave in arm and had a warlike spirit on land and on sea. But some days earlier he had addressed bold statements to the emperor about the navy; for he had said that our triremes would not match

those of the Italians even if they were to be multiplied in number in relation to them—for he knew precisely the circumstances of both—and so he was dismissed from the command and Iophre succeeded to it and suffered a very serious defeat. For he had command of 30 triremes but was defeated by 13, losing as many ships as the enemy had;[18] each one of the enemy ships gained one trireme as spoil, with its men and weapons.

And that is how things were. But the emperor John was again at peace with the emperor Asan[19] and both were bound by their kinship, even though Asan did not strictly observe the agreements made on oath. For there were times when, for a small gain, he broke them.[20] However, in-between times, he publicly and generally showed affection and did what was required of friends.

§37 *Akrop. presents the background to the siege of Tzouroulos in 1240 by Baldwin II and his allies, as if the Latin emperor's army had been raised by Louis IX, king of France. This campaign was, however, part of a crusade of pope Gregory IX against John III: see §37.8. Tzouroulos, taken at this time by the Latins, was reconquered by John III in 1247: §47.*

Akrop. also makes mention here of John III's navy which he otherwise rarely discusses. He refers to the conquest of Dakybiza and Niketiatou but does not indicate that the ships and the army also attacked Constantinople at this time (1240–1). See §37.18 and Introduction, 100.

[1] This sentence contains alliteration of *π* and assonance (*πολυσχιδῶς*, *πραγμάτων*, *πολυαρχίαν*, *ποικίλως*) which the translation does not imitate. See Macrides, 'George Akropolites' rhetoric', 203–4 and n. 17.

[2] Baldwin II of Courtenay (see §27) was in the west asking for aid for the Latin empire of Constantinople at the time of John of Brienne's death in 1237 (see §34). He was not crowned until 1240: Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 182.

[3] 'The king of the Franks', Louis IX (1226–70), was related to Baldwin by blood; both Baldwin and Louis were descendants of Louis VI, by his sons; Baldwin was a great-grandchild and Louis a great-great-grandchild. Although Louis did aid Baldwin in his attempt to gain support for the Latin empire of Constantinople (Aubry, 947.5–9), he was not the only western ruler to provide help. A crusade against John III was declared by Gregory IX from 1238: see Grumel, 'L'authenticité de la lettre de Jean Vatatzès, empereur de Nicée au pape Grégoire IX', 456. See Weiler, 'Gregory IX, Frederick II, and the liberation of the Holy Land, 1230–1239', 199–201; Spence, 'Gregory IX's attempted expeditions to the Latin empire of Constantinople', 163–76. For the vehemence of Akrop.'s attack against Louis, 'a great enemy of the Romans', see the Introduction, 33.

[4] Akrop.'s figures for the forces assembled are not comparable to those given by Aubry (946.44–6) who says that Baldwin left France in 1239 with 700 mounted knights and 30 000 foot soldiers.

[5] Akrop. comments here, as at §27.6, that the Latins do not have sufficient resources to make a sea (or a land) journey.

[6] Austria: Heis., 'Index nominum', *Opera* I, 358.

[7] The itinerary Akrop. gives is corroborated by Mouskes (30470–4) and Aubry (946–7). See Gregory IX's letters preparing the way for the army: Auvray, *Registres* II. no. 4634, col. 1179 (December 1238).

[8] Akrop. implies that Baldwin's troops passed through his territory at a time when Asan was in alliance with the emperor John. See §36.

[9] The town was taken in 1240: Matthew Paris, IV, 54–5. For the Latins' alliance with the Cumans, see Aubry, 947.1–2; also at Tzouroulos earlier, see §36.

[10] For John Petraliphas, see §24, §40. On the title *megas chartoularios* see Guilland, 'Le chartulaire et le grand chartulaire', 405–26, esp. 419–20. Skout. (482.31=*Additamenta*, no. 25, p. 283) calls Petraliphas a *megas hetaireiarches*. Although this title accompanied a military function, while that of *megas chartoularios* did not, it is not possible to argue on this basis that Skout.'s information is correct here. At Nicaea non-military titles were often given to holders of military positions. See the case of Tarchaneiotes who had been in command at Tzouroulos before Petraliphas (§36) and was *epi tes trapezes*. On this, see Angold, *Exile*, 183, 201.

[11] The phrase γενναῖος τὴν χεῖρα (Heis. 58.20; 59.16) is Akrop.'s formula for a good military man. See also §27: βριαρὸν τε χεῖρα; §71: ἰσχυρός τὴν χεῖρα.

[12] The text has been changed at Heis. 58.22 (περιὸν) to περισσόν, proposed by Bases: Wirth, 'Addenda', xxvii.

[13] The emperor John had at least two shipyards, the one he would have used in this case, on the Hellespont (§22, §23) and another at Smyrna (§48). See the Introduction, 100.

[14] For the status of Nikomedeia at this time, see §24.1. For Dakibyza (modern Gebze), Niketiatou (Eskihisar) and Charax, along the northern coast of the gulf of Nikomedeia, see Foss, *Nicomedia*, 50–2, 59–61. Akrop. gives the form 'Niketiatou', while for Pach. (I, 257 app. at 1. 24) it is 'Niketiaton'.

[15] The fourteenth-century *Life* of the emperor John III likewise comments on the quality of the sailors, saying that some of them were going to sea for the first time on this occasion. The anonymous author ascribes the failure of the fleet to this factor: ed. Heisenberg, 220.1–7.

[16] Iophre the Armenian is not mentioned in any other source. For his name 'Geoffrey', cf. Chon. 600.46–9 and below, §81.

[17] Manuel Kontophre, whose surname is a Greek transliteration of 'Godfrey', appears in documents of 1237 and 1240 as *pansebastos sebastos* and *doux* of the Thrakesion theme where he was concerned with the collection of the naval tax: MM IV, 249–53; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 143–4. His seal, identifying him as a *sebastos*, survives: Laurent, *Les bulles métriques*, no. 240, p. 142. After the defeat of Iophre, Manuel was reinstated as commander of the triremes: see §40.9.

[18] Akrop. does not indicate that 'Iophre's' defeat was in a battle outside the walls of Constantinople. Dandolo (298.10–14) and Martino da Canale (366) are sources for this battle. They give different figures for John III's losses, relating that 10 of the 25 galleys he had were taken by the Latins, who had 16 ships. The battle can be dated to May–June 1241 by Dandolo's entry ('in the thirteenth year of Iocobo Tiepolo's ducate'). Again, although Akrop. does not mention it, Aubry (950.23–4) refers to a two-year treaty of June 1241 between the Latins, John III and his son, and Asan's son Kaliman. See Hendrickx, *Regestes*, no. 212, pp 137–8.

[19] For Akrop.'s use of 'emperor' and 'monarch' for Asan, see at §33.2, §34, and the Introduction, 41.

[20] Akrop. here implies that even after the reconciliation of 1241 between Asan and John III there were occasions when Asan did not honour his agreement. Asan died in June of that year: Aubry, 950.12–15; 950.23–4. See §39.13. Above (§34, §36), Akrop. gives examples of Asan's change of alliance on three previous occasions.

38. Since, then, John Asan was bereaved of his wife who was from Hungary, as my narrative already related, he took to wife the daughter of Theodore Angelos, Eirene,[1] who was beautiful in appearance and of good stature. He did this disregarding the marriage connection of her father's brother [Manuel], that is, that Manuel was married to a daughter of Asan by a concubine.[2] Theodore Angelos had two male children, John and Demetrios,[3] and two female, Anna,[4] and the said Eirene, with whom Asan begot three children, Michael, Theodora, and Maria.[5] At all events, Theodore Angelos was released from imprisonment for this reason[6] and, with the consent of his son-in-law Asan, he determined to gain control of Thessalonike and all the territory which he had previously ruled. So, taking some men from Asan, since he could not openly set out against his brother Manuel, he secretly contrived entry into Thessalonike, dressing himself in some paltry rags and thus stealing entry into the city. When he entered and was recognized by some men by whom he wished to be recognized, whom he had befriended and helped when he prospered, in whom he also confided his scheme against his brother, not much time was needed before he gained control again of Thessalonike and the

surrounding cities and lands. He did not wish to be called emperor, because of the condition of his eyes, but he named his son John emperor, shod his feet in red shoes and prescribed that he sign with letters of the same colour, while he [Theodore] was to manage public affairs and administer his son's business.[7] Taking his brother Manuel out of office and putting him in a trireme,[8] he exiled him to the city of Attalos,[9] while he sent Manuel's wife away to her father Asan. Asan was more fond of his father-in-law Theodore than his son-in-law Manuel; for he loved his wife Eirene exceedingly, no less than Antony did Cleopatra.[10]

When Manuel ran ashore at the city of Attalos, he found that, contrary to expectation, the descendants of Hagar treated him with compassion. For when he said that he was heading for the emperor John, they allowed him passage and***,[11] supplying him fittingly.[12] From there, then, he went to the emperor and the emperor welcomed him gladly, both as one related by family and as one formerly called despot.[13] Giving him money and six triremes, the emperor sent him forth to Great Vlachia,[14] after receiving awful oaths from him, as he [the emperor] was fully discerning and shrewd.

When Manuel arrived in the region of Demetrias,[15] he indicated his arrival to some of his retainers[16] by letters; others he lured with promises. Many days had not passed before he had gathered an army about him and ruled Pharsala, Larissa, Platamon,[17] and the surrounding area. Then, having made a truce,[18] he united with his brothers Constantine and Theodore. Constantine was despot, as we said, and ruled over those places which we related,[19] while Theodore was the father of John who was proclaimed in Thessalonike. When they joined together, both brothers persuaded Manuel to abandon his truce with the emperor John. 'Willingly but with a reluctant heart'[20] he consented to their wishes, as those who happened to be there and know about these things said. From that time on they were united, content with their own territories which were shared out among them, and they also had peace agreements with the Latins in the Peloponnese[21] and in Euripos.[22]

§38 *Akrop. continues from §26 the story of Manuel Komnenos Doukas and his brother Theodore. Theodore's release from imprisonment by Asan and, therefore, Manuel's expulsion from Thessalonike are dated to 1237 on the basis of the date of the battle of Tzouroulos (§36), during which Asan's wife died. This is the only chronological indication for Theodore's return to Thessalonike. It follows that 1237 is the earliest date for the marriage of Asan to Eirene and Theodore's release from captivity. See §38.1.*

[1] Asan's Hungarian wife died in 1237, at the time of the siege at Tzouroulos (§35.7). His marriage to Eirene, his second, according to Akrop. and Aubry

(950) (but see Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 86–7), must have taken place by 1238, since he had three children by her (see §38.5) before he died in 1241 (§40). For Eirene see also below §43.14; §45.23; Georgieva, 'The Byzantine princesses in Bulgaria', 170–5. Eirene was Theodore's daughter by marriage to Maria Doukaina: §24.12; Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 160, p. 165.

[2] Eirene's 'father's brother', Manuel, was married to Maria, Asan's daughter by a concubine: see §25. Akrop. comments on Asan's disregard for the prohibitions which applied to his marriage. He took as his wife the niece of his son-in-law, a marriage prohibited in the fourth degree. See Zhishman, *Das Eherecht der Orientalischen Kirche*, I, 316–17. For a similar case see Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 67–9. On problematic marriages in the 'despotate' of Epiros, see Pitsakis, '*Ζητήματα κωλυμάτων γάμου*', 365–6. On Manuel, see §26.

[3] For Demetrios, see Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 46, p. 93 and below, §45.

[4] For Anna, who is mentioned here only by Akrop., see Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 47, p. 93.

[5] See below, §39, where Asan's children by Eirene are said to be Michael, Anna, and Maria. Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 112–13, resolves this discrepancy in the case of Theodora/Anna by suggesting they are the same person.

[6] The 'reason' for his release is the marriage of Asan to Eirene which must have taken place by 1238: see §38.1.

[7] Theodore had been blinded by Asan after his defeat at the battle of Klokotnitza in 1230: see §26. Coins and seals refer to Theodore's son, John (Komnenos Doukas) as 'emperor' (1237/8–41: see §40.24). See Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 279–88; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 578–96; Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I/1, no. 115, pp 105–6; Oikonomides, *Dated Byzantine lead seals*, no. 132, pp 124–5. His coins and seals portray him beardless. Although no documents survive which might have been issued by John during his reign, a letter of the metropolitan of Corfu, George Bardanes, to a secretary or chancery official of the 'emperor John', refers to a *regium diploma*: Hoeck and Loenertz, *Nikolaos-Nektarios von Otranto*, 227–8. That Theodore was the real power, as Akrop. indicates, is stated by Aubry (938.42–3) and reflected in a letter of Bardanes who expressed his dependence on him and not his son John: 'One solace remains to me, that the emperor Theodore, released from captivity, has shown me the old good will and interest' (Hoeck and Loenertz, 227–8, esp. 228.22–4). For John, see §40.

[8] Akrop.'s language conveys forcefully through the prefixes *ἐκ*(*βαλὼν*) and *ἐμ*(*βαλὼν*) (Heis. 61.9, 10) Theodore's removal and dispatch of his brother.

[9] On Manuel's position in Thessalonike, until his brother's return, see §26. The port of Attaleia (modern Antalya) on the southern coast of Asia Minor was ruled in 1204 by an Aldebrandinos. It was taken by Kaykhusraw in 1207:

Chon. 639.73–5; 639.1–640.12. See Oikonomides, 'La décomposition de l'empire byzantin', 21; Hoffmann, *Rudimente*, 69–71. Akrop. does not explain Theodore's reason for sending his brother to Antalya. However, Theodore seems to have had some previous contact with Turks. A letter of Bardanes, metropolitan of Corfu, to the patriarch Germanos, defends Theodore Komnenos Doukas from the charge that he had had friendly relations with the Turks and had lived among them before he left Asia Minor for Epiros: see Loenertz, 'Lettre', 498.401–6; Introduction, 94.

[10] Skout. (484.25–6) adds: 'he loved his wife Eirene over and beyond what was reasonable'. Akrop. cites the example of Antony's love for Cleopatra in a way which indicates it was proverbial in his time. See also Chon. 347 for another legendary couple, Demetrios Poliorketes and Lamia. Passionate love of one's spouse is rarely remarked upon by Byzantine writers, and then only when the person with those feelings is a 'barbarian', as in this case. See also Milutin's love for Simonis: Greg. I, 287.8–15. See Garland, 'Sexual morality at the late Byzantine court', 48 and n. 145. Otherwise passionate love is attributed to Byzantine emperors for women who are not their wives: Andronikos I for Maraptike (Chon. 347), John III for Marchesina (Akrop. §52.20), Michael VIII for Anna-Constanza of Sicily (Pach. I, 247.11–29).

[11] There is a lacuna in the manuscripts. Skout. (484.30) supplies, 'they allowed him to do as he wished' (*κατὰ τὸ βουλητόν*).

[12] Akrop. explains the good reception Manuel received from the Turks in terms of their good relations with the emperor John III. That the Turks and the empire of Nicaea were on good terms is corroborated by Ibn Natif who mentions a truce that was made in 1231. See Cahen, 'Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu au XIII[e] siècle', 148–9. See, also, the Introduction, 93. However, the friendly reception Manuel received should perhaps be ascribed to his brother Theodore's good relations with them: see §38.9.

[13] See §26.

[14] See §25.

[15] On the Pagasitic Gulf.

[16] Retainers: the *oikeioi* or *oikeioi anthropoi* (= Latin *familiares*), men bound to the emperor, or some other lord, in service. See Verpeaux, 'Les oikeioi', 89–98. See also §52, §69.

[17] In Thessaly.

[18] This truce was made sometime between 1237 (see §38.1) and 1239, the *terminus ante quem* for Manuel's death (see §39.1).

[19] Akrop. mentions Constantine in §14 but does not refer to his title of despot before this passage, nor the lands that he ruled over. It is likely that he was made despot at the same time as his brother Manuel, anytime after

Theodore's proclamation as emperor in the mid-1220s (see §21). See also §39 for the last mention of Constantine, still as despot.

[20] *Il.* 4.43.

[21] The Peloponnese was for the most part in the control of Geoffrey II of Villehardouin, whose father, nephew of the participant in the Fourth Crusade and author of the chronicle, had originally conquered territory there in 1204: Vill. §325–6; Bon, *La Morée franque*, 51–80. No other source refers to an agreement at this time but Aubry (938) records that Manuel had become Geoffrey's man already in 1236.

[22] The *Partitio* had assigned parts of Euripos (Euboia: see §27) to the Venetians and the central area of the island to Boniface but the lands were ruled by Lombard lords with Venice as overlord. See *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 219; Bury, 'The Lombards and Venetians in Euboia (1205–1303)', 309–52; Koder, *Negroponte*, 45–6. The agreement Akrop. refers to here may have been with William of Verona, lord of the southern part of Euboia. He claimed rights over Thessalonike through his marriage to Elena, niece of Demetrios of Montferrat, ex-king of Thessalonike and son of Boniface of Montferrat and Maria, the widow of Isaac II. See Nicol, *Despotate*, 136; Loenertz, 'Les seigneurs tierciers de Négrepont', 245–6, 247.

39. Not much time had passed before Manuel departed this life,[1] having regretted, they say, his transgressions with regard to the emperor. The empress Eirene died also, a woman both temperate and regal who exhibited imperial majesty greatly.[2] She took pleasure in learning and listened to learned men with delight. She valued them exceedingly,[3] as can be seen from this. For, when an eclipse occurred, as the sun was passing through Cancer, around midday[4]—since, when it happened, I had arrived at the imperial residence (the emperor with the empress were residing near a place which they call Periklystra)[5]—she asked me the reason for the eclipse. I was not able to say precisely, for I had just touched on the mysteries of philosophy, instructed by the learned Blemmydes.[6] However, I knew as much as it was possible to learn from him at that time and I said that the reason for the overshadowing was the superposition of the moon and although the sun appeared to be gone, the loss of illumination was not real; however, the moon does suffer this [loss of illumination] when it falls within the shadow of the earth, since it boasts of its light from the sun.[7] When the discussion became protracted, the physician Nicholas[8] contradicted what was being said. He was a man who partook minimally of philosophy but was consummate in his own profession and especially that which is known through experience. The empress was very fond of him; he held the dignity of *aktouarios*. At any rate, as he was contradicting me, I was all the more talkative. In the course of what was being said,

the empress called me foolish. Then, as if she had done something which is not proper, turning toward the emperor, she said, 'Perhaps I spoke improperly when I called him foolish?'[9] And the emperor replied, 'It is not strange, for he is a young man'—(I was 21 years old then)[10]—'and the name is not altogether unbefitting him.' But the empress said, 'It is not right for us to address in this manner a person who proposes philosophical theories.'[11]

I have related this to show how she loved learning and valued those who have it. As I said, this empress died; I think that the eclipse of the sun presaged her death. A comet also appeared six months earlier in the northern parts. It was a bearded star and lasted three months, appearing not in one place but in several.[12]

A short time later, the ruler of the Bulgarians, Asan, also departed this life,[13] a man who proved to be excellent among barbarians not only with regard to his own people but also even with respect to foreigners. For he was most compassionate to those foreigners who came over to him and especially to the Romans, and he generously provided them with a living. When he died, his son, whom they called Kaliman, born to him by his Hungarian wife,[14] received the realm. This Kaliman also had a sister whose name was Thamar.[15] By Angelos' daughter three children were born to Asan, a son Michael and, as we mentioned, daughters, Maria and Anna.[16] Now when Kaliman took up his father's rule, he renewed the treaties with the emperor John[17] and there was peace in these affairs. When Manuel, Theodore's brother, died, his nephew Michael[18] gained possession of the territory held by him and added it to his land.[19] Reconciled once again were Theodore Angelos, who had his son John in Thessalonike and in the area around it known as an emperor, and John's uncle Constantine who was called despot,[20] and Theodore's nephew Michael.

§39 *Akrop. reports his conversation at court with the empress Eirene and the physician Nicholas on the causes of the eclipse of the sun in 1239. See the Introduction, 9. Horrocks,* Greek: A history of the language and its speakers, *178, concludes on the basis of this reported conversation that the 'formal spoken language of the court remained relatively classical'. Akrop., however, conveys conversations not in their colloquial form as they were spoken, but in the style most appropriate to the Greek of the* History*'s narrative. See the Introduction, 51. For Akrop.'s personal intrusions in his* History, *see the Introduction, 44–6; for his presentation of the empress Eirene, Introduction, 58. The passage is important also for dating the deaths of Manuel Angelos (39.1), the empress Eirene (39.12), and Asan (39.13).*

[1] The date of Manuel's death can be determined only approximately from the context in which it is mentioned, the death of the empress Eirene: late 1239. See below, §39.12. The vague formulation, 'not much time had passed'

since the reconciliation of Manuel with his brothers, gives an impressionistic date, c. 1238–9, for Manuel's death.

[2] Akrop. also above (at §23.13) notes Eirene's imperial bearing. Her imperial origins are emphasized too in the verses written upon her death by an anonymous *megas logariastes*: see the Introduction, 20–1, for the authorship of these verses. Her imperial ancestry was particularly important because it was through her that the emperor John had the right to the throne. She was the link with the last reigning emperor at Constantinople, Alexios III, her grandfather. Akrop.'s description of her as 'regal' and exhibiting 'imperial majesty' may also have to do with her generosity. See Pach. I, 59.10–13; §52.25. For her date of death, see below §39.12.

[3] Skout. (485.21–3=*Additamenta*, no. 26, p. 283) says that: 'She valued virtue exceedingly, regarding priests and monks as representations of God.' He omits Akrop.'s discussion of the eclipse.

[4] The eclipse of the sun took place on 3 June 1239: Grumel, *La chronologie*, 467. Salimbene (I, §60, p. 63.32–4) describes the total eclipse which he witnessed in Lucca on Friday, 3 June, at the ninth hour. Another eclipse of the sun is recorded for October 1241 (Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* II, 194–5) but it cannot be the same as the one to which Akrop. refers because his took place in a summer ('Cancer') month. See Heis. *Opera* II, iv, n. 2; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 21 and n. 61.

[5] Periklystra is probably Halka Pinar, the 'Circular Spring', also known as the Baths of Diana, in a suburb of Smyrna, which was a popular summer resort in the last century. See Bean, *Aegean Turkey*, 46–7; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 36–7; below at §52 Akrop. gives an explanation of the name.

[6] It is not possible to determine how long Akrop. had been studying with Blem. by this time. Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 21, understands from this passage that Akrop. had just completed his studies with Blem. in 1239. However, Akrop. seems to be saying that he had only recently begun (*ἡψάμην*: Heis. 63.5) to study philosophy with him. See §32.6.

[7] Akrop.'s explanation is a paraphrase of the passage in Blem.'s *Epitome physike* or *Manual of Natural Science*, which he wrote as an introduction to philosophy for beginning students and in which he relates the differences between solar and lunar eclipses: PG 142.688, 1265C. Blem.'s own explanation derives from Cleomedes, a second-century AD astronomer: see Pingree, 'Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan astronomy', 135–6, for a discussion of this passage in Akrop., and Lackner, 'Zum Lehrbuch der Physik des Nikephoros Blemmydes', 157–69.

[8] The 'physician Nicholas' has been identified with Nicholas Myrepsos, author of the *Dynameron*, a compilation of pharmaceutical recipes which was based on the *Antidotarium* of Nicholas of Salerno but was more extensive. The

identification of the physician Nicholas with Nicholas Myrepsos relies on the similarity of their names and their work. The *Dynameron* was translated into Latin in the fourteenth century and was in use in France until the seventeenth. See *ODB*, s.v. Myrepsos, Nicholas; Hunger, *Literatur* II, 312; Costomiris, 'Etudes sur les écrits inédits des anciens médecins grecs', 406–14. The title of *aktouarios* was given to physicians at the imperial court from the thirteenth century. See Pach. II, 665.17; Trapp, 'Die Stellung der Ärzte in der Gesellschaft der Palaiologenzeit', 230–4. For the title before the thirteenth century, see T. S. Miller, *The birth of the hospital in the Byzantine empire* (Baltimore and New York, 1985), 184.

[9] The word which the empress uses of Akrop., *μωρός*, means both 'foolish' and 'child'. See Heisenberg, *Opera* II, vii, n. 4; Krumbacher, 'Die Moskauer Sammlung mittelgriechischen Sprichwörter', 453. The emperor's reply shows that a play on the word is intended. See also §63.12.

[10] I have added the parentheses here and resumed the quotation marks for the second part of the emperor's answer which Heisenberg (63.22–3) punctuates as if it were part of Akrop.'s statement about himself. If Akrop. was 21 in 1239, he was born in 1217. See the Introduction, 6. The emperor uses the word *μειράκιον* to describe Akrop., a word for someone in his teens to his early twenties: see §2.4.

[11] The empress Eirene's comment on her statement about Akrop. reflects what the anonymous author of the *Life* of the emperor John says about her character: 'She could not bear to hear or see anything discordant or ungraceful; moreover she was far from doing anything which was unseemly' (ed. Heisenberg, 218.34–6). As Pingree ('Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan astronomy', 136) points out, Eirene regrets what she said about Akrop. not because his explanation of the eclipse was correct but because she considered it improper to insult one engaged in philosophical studies. For Pingree, this passage in Akrop. reveals the relatively low level of knowledge of astronomy at Nicaea.

[12] Heis. dates Eirene's death to 1241 (p. 62 margin; Heis. *Opera* II, iv, n. 2) and this date has been widely accepted, also for the deaths of Manuel Angelos and Asan (e.g. Nicol, *Despotate*, 136). However, the only securely dated event in §39 is the solar eclipse of June 1239 (§39.4) which 'presaged her death'. Akrop. also mentions a comet which was visible six months earlier (than her death). A comet was visible in Europe from 3 June 1239, and another, with general visibility, on 31 January 1240 (Grumel, *La chronologie*, 474). Brezeanu argues that it was the second comet which could be seen also in Asia Minor and which appeared six months before Eirene's death. He therefore dates her death to the summer of 1240 ('Notice sur les rapports de Fredéric II de Hohenstaufen avec Jean III Vatatzès', 584). However, for a date of late 1239

which would be more in keeping with the date of the emperor John's remarriage (end 1240/1: §52.19), see Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 21 and n. 61. For problems of dating, see the Introduction, 42–3. That the empress Eirene became a nun before her death is known from the verses written by an anonymous *megas logariastes*: *Opera* II, 6.104–8; Hörandner, 'Prodromos-Reminiszenzen bei Dichtern der nikänischen Zeit', 92.104–8. On the authorship of the verses, see the Introduction, 20–1.

Blem.'s verses on the occasion of the empress's death give emphasis to light and darkness in nature, using the analogy of a solar eclipse: Bury, 'An unpublished poem of Nicephorus Blemmydes', 418–24. Thus, the connection Akrop. makes between Eirene's death and the eclipse reflects at least one other contemporary's view. For Blem.'s influence on Akrop., see the Introduction, 47–51. A date of late 1239/early 1240 for Eirene's death makes more sense also of the connection contemporaries made with the eclipse: as Pingree ('Gregory Chioniades and Palaeologan astronomy', 136) accepts a 1241 date for Eirene's death, he finds Akrop.'s linking of the 1239 eclipse and her death far-fetched.

[13] Aubry, 950.12: on the feast of St John, 24 June 1241.

[14] On her see §36, §38.

[15] Aubry (950.13–14) mentions Kaliman (1241–6) and an unnamed daughter. For Kaliman and Thamar, see Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, 104–5. For Thamar, see also §50. Helen, also Asan's daughter by his first wife, is not mentioned here. For her, see §31, §39.

[16] See §38.5 for the children of Asan with Eirene.

[17] According to Aubry (950.23–4), in 1241 Kaliman made a two-year truce with the people of Constantinople (*Constantinopolitani*), the emperor John Vatatzes, and his son.

[18] Michael Komnenos Doukas (Michael II) was the illegitimate son of Michael I (§14), the brother of Theodore, Manuel, and Constantine. See §38 and Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 48, pp 93–4. According to the *Life* of St Theodora, Michael was exiled to the Peloponnese after his uncle Theodore's accession to the throne but returned when Theodore was imprisoned by Asan in 1230. Upon his return, he 'inherited his father's rule': ed. Moustoxydes, 44; PG 127.905A–B. Other sources show that the *Life*'s information may be reliable on this matter. Bartholomeo Scriba mentions Michael as one of the people with whom Genoese ambassadors negotiated in 1231 (MGH 18 (1863), 177.29–33). Mouskes (29040) mentions a 'Micalis' as one of the enemies of the Latins in Constantinople about this time. Likewise, a chrysobull of 1236 issued by Michael for Corfu, and an *horismos* of 1237 for the merchants of Ragusa, giving them free access to all ports of Epiros, indicate that Michael was based in Epiros and exercised authority there.

[19] The lands over which Michael had control before he gained possession of Manuel's lands (Pharsala, Larissa and Platamon in Thessaly: §38) were in Epiros. See §39.18.

[20] See §38.19.

40. Since the Bulgarian Asan was out of the way and a young man ruled over the land of the Bulgarians,[1] the emperor John, taking advantage of the respite, attempted to do away with the imperial title bestowed on John, the son of Angelos.[2] First he won over John's father Theodore with messages. And indeed, since Theodore was the kind of man who goes about his affairs unwarily, he went to the emperor John,[3] suspecting nothing of what was to happen. The emperor received him readily and honoured him, calling him uncle,[4] sitting with him at the same table and extending all the other acts of kindness. The emperor had him in his hands, and it happened too that a battle-worthy army of Scyths had been added to his Roman forces; the emperor John had won them over a short time ago with gifts and manifold liberalities, had changed them from their wild nature and taken them away from Macedonia, transferring them to the eastern regions.[5] Placing confidence in them and fearing nothing from the Bulgarians, partly because of the treaties that had been made and partly because Bulgarian affairs were being conducted by a young man, the emperor left the east, crossed the Hellespont and advanced against John who was recognized as emperor in Thessalonike, having with him his forces, made up of the Roman armies and of the Scyths.

When he had passed through the regions of Thrace and Macedonia and left behind Christoupolis[6] and the Strymon, he turned towards the fortress of Rentine,[7] which was guarded by some of John's men. These men deserted the fortress even before they caught sight of the emperor John's armies and, fleeing at full speed, they entered Thessalonike. The emperor's men, finding the city bereft of fighting men, occupied it and established a garrison. The emperor assembled his entire army and pitched camp somewhere near Thessalonike, about eight stades away. The name of the place is the 'Garden of Provatas'.[8] Since it was not easy for him to set up siege towers and machines against a city of such size and to conquer it by that kind of warfare, he made raids and plundered all the surrounding lands with his armies and especially with the Scyths. They made plunder of everything. He had triremes with him also which Manuel Kontophre[9] commanded. Distinguished men[10] accompanied the emperor: Demetrios Tornikes who managed public matters and mediated in affairs,[11] Andronikos Palaiologos who was girt with the authority of the *megas domestikos*,[12] directing the affairs of the armies, and many others appointed as commanders: Alexios Raoul who was *protovestiarios*,[13] Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes, the *epi tes trapezes*,[14] Kontostephanos who held the

dignity of *protosebastos*,[15] Petraliphas who was called *megas chartoularios*,[16] as well as not a few other notable men. The emperor John encamped beside the city and did everything he could do against it. But those inside did not hesitate to act; they came out of the gates and charged against the emperor's men.

Many days had not passed before the Tatar[17] people, having advanced against the Muslims and made war against them, won a victory.[18] Word reached the emperor who was informed by his son, the emperor Theodore.[19] The emperor John had left Theodore behind to reside in the region of Pegai,[20] leaving with him also John Mouzalon who was a *mystikos* when he was ranked among the worldly, but who at that time was a monk, a sharp-witted and energetic man, suited to imperial affairs more than others,[21] and Michael Libadarios who was *megas hetaireiarches*.[22] When, at any rate, the emperor heard the report, he ordered those who knew about it to keep silent and to communicate with no one concerning it, and he set out to come to an agreement with John within the city, using John's father, Theodore Angelos, as an ambassador in this. When 40 days had passed, the treaties were drawn up and the oaths were advanced. He took off the red shoes and the 'pyramid'[23] studded with pearls, on top of which also a red stone is perched, imperial insignia these, and was honoured by the emperor with the despotic rank,[24] and he showed himself to be well-disposed towards the emperor. When the emperor had accomplished these things, he returned to the east, leaving the emperor a despot and subject, having bound him with the customary oaths, honoured him with fitting gifts, and favoured with money all those who were subject to him. He left with him also his father Theodore.

§40 *Akrop. relates John III's expedition to conquer Thessalonike in the summer–autumn of 1241. The date can be determined from §41, where Akrop. describes the emperor John's return to the east for the winter of 1241–2. The emperor's plans change when he learns from his son, the emperor Theodore II, of the Mongols' victory against the Turks. He then comes to an agreement with John, son of Theodore Komnenos Doukas, and has him exchange his imperial insignia for those of a despot. This act is usually dated to 1242 (see §40.24) but should be seen as taking place in late 1241 (see §41). For the emperor John III's eventual conquest of Thessalonike in 1246, see §45.*

*Unusually, Akrop. mentions that the emperor had ships on this expedition and that he had left his son at Pegai (see §40.9, 19, 20). This may be an indication of another attack of John III on Constantinople, after the one reported by Dandolo (*Chronica, *298.10–14) for 1241 (see §37). It is also possible that the ships were intended to assist in the conquest of Thessalonike.*

[1] For Asan's death by June 1241, see §39.13. For Kaliman (1241–6), see §39.15.

[2] John Komnenos Doukas: §38.7.

[3] Only Akrop. (Skout. 486.16–25 and Ephraim, 8423–30) relate this incident.

[4] The empress Eirene, wife of the emperor John, and Theodore Angelos were related. She was the granddaughter of the emperor Alexios III who was a first cousin of Theodore (§8, §14). In Byzantine and later Greek usage, 'uncle' is the kin term Eirene, and, by extension, her husband John, would use in addressing this relation. On kinship terms, see Binon, 'A propos d'un prostagma inédit d'Andronic III Paléologue', 146–55.

[5] The Tatar invasions of the late 1230s forced the Scyths (=Cumans: see §11, §13, §25, §40, §61) into Thrace: §35. Greg. (I, 36.16–37.9) also refers to the emperor John's settling of Cumans in the 'eastern regions', the Maeander area and Phrygia, and their recruitment into his army. Theodore II, in his oration for his father, states that the settlement of the Cumans in the east served to check the Turks' westward movement: ed. Tartaglia, 28.107–11. Although Cumans are attested in the 'eastern regions', in the area of Smyrna (MM IV, 165–68; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 26–7), the date of their settlement there cannot be ascertained. Akrop. says only that this happened 'a short time ago', referring to some time before 1241.

By '[he] changed them from their wild nature', Akrop. means that the barbarian Cumans (see §36), formerly nomads, were settled and 'Romanized' by the emperor John. Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid, writing after 1250 (John III's victory on Rhodes is mentioned at 88.23), likewise says, 'the nomad Scyth . . . shedding his savage nature, assumed a Roman-loving one' (ed. Mercati, *Collectanea byzantina* I, 84.26–85.1). This change was achieved through baptism. The emperor John is praised for this conversion of Cumans in other sources also: Theodore II's oration for John III (ed. Tartaglia, 28.107–29.2), Blem.'s verses on the monastery of Sosandra (ed. Heisenberg, 118.97–9), Akrop.'s funeral oration for the emperor John (*Opera* II, 24.14–22); *Akolouthia* for the emperor John (Polemis, 'Remains of an acoluthia', 543.7–8; 546).

[6] Christoupolis (modern Kavalla) on the coast, to the northwest of the island of Thasos, was described by Vill. (§280) as 'one of the strongest castles in the world'. For the Strymon, see also §58.

[7] According to Kant. (II, 236.4–6), Rentine, near Lake Volve, was a day's distance from Thessalonike. For the fortifications at Rentine, see N. K. Moutsopoulos, *Ρεντίνα* II: *Τὸ Βυζαντινό κάστρο τῆς Μυγδονικῆς Ρεντίνας* (Athens, 2001).

[8] Akrop. uses the classicizing word 'stades' (*στάδια*) here and at §61, §63. As a unit of measure it has no clear practical meaning when used by Byzantine authors: Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, 32–3. It is therefore of no help in locating the 'Garden of Provatas' which Vakalopoulos, following Tafrali's

identification, locates to the northeast of Thessalonike, in a fertile place with vineyards and a spring: Vakalopoulos, '*Προσδιορισμὸς τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ τοπονυμίου "Κῆπος τοῦ Προβατᾶ"*', 22–7. See also Tafrali, *Thessalonique des origines au XIV^e^ siècle*, 226 and n. 1.

The name Provatas appears in the sources in the eleventh century: Skyl. 396.26; 398.80–1; 409.83–4; Bănescu, 'Les sceaux byzantins trouvés à Silistrie', 326–8. However, the first member of the family who is associated with Thessalonike is a Theophanes Provatas mentioned in Eustathios' description of the Norman conquest of Thessalonike (1185): Melville-Jones, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki, The capture of Thessaloniki*, 92.32–5; 204. A George Provatas is known from Chomatenos (ed. Prinzing, 228.46–7) but his connection with Thessalonike is uncertain.

[9] For Kontophre, see §37.

[10] The 'distinguished men' Akrop. lists here held prominent positions in the empire after 1204, as had their ancestors in Constantinople before its conquest. Chon. (451.70–3) singles out Palaiologos, Raoul, and Petraliphas as men related to the Angeloi who had a say in proclaiming Alexios III emperor in 1195. Most of these men could trace their ancestry back to the late eleventh century, if not earlier. They are all mentioned several times by Akrop. in the course of his narrative and Pach. (I, 93) says of the same families that they belonged to 'the noble and golden lineage'.

[11] For Tornikes' family and function, see §49.

[12] For Palaiologos, see §28, §46.

[13] On the Raouls, of Norman ancestry, see Fassoulakes, *The Byzantine family of Raoul-Ral(l)es*, 2, 4, 15–16 (Alexios Raoul). For Alexios Raoul, see also §49.

[14] For the Tarchaneiotai, see §23.4. For Nikephoros, see §36.5; §49.

[15] The Kontostephanos mentioned here as *protosebastos* is Theodore (see also §48). He came from a celebrated military family first attested in the late eleventh century: Kinn. 274.11–13; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 129–30; Darrouzès, *Georges et Démétrios Tornikès*, 57–62. Like the Kammytzes family, likewise distinguished by its military men, the family held extensive property along the Maeander river valley before 1204: *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 218.23–5: *Provintia Laodikie et Meandri . . . cum Contostephanati, cum Camiçatis.* For Nikephoros Kontostephanos, *sebastokrator*, in the reign of Theodore I Laskaris, see MM IV, 291; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, nos 1694–5, p. 10. After Theodore Kontostephanos the family is rarely heard of again. A Demetrios Kontostephanos of the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century is known from a sale of land: MM I, 312 and a note to cod. Vat. gr. 307: I. Mercati and F. de' Cavalieri, *Codices Vaticani graeci* I (Rome, 1923), 456. See also Polemis, *Doukai*, 83; *PLP*, fasc. 6, 13118.

[16] For John Petraliphas, the *megas chartoularios*, see §37 and discussion at §24.12. He had been taken prisoner by the Latins at the battle of Tzouroulos in 1241.

[17] Akrop.'s name for the Tatars, *Ταχάριοι* (Heis. p. 67.2), is a variation on *Τόχαροι* used by Pach. (II, 445.2), an ancient name first attested in Dionysios Periegetes (third century AD): Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 329. Akrop. calls the Tatars an *ethnos*, a 'people' and a *genos*, 'race' (§42), words he uses interchangeably.

[18] Akrop. refers to the invasion of the Tatars in 1241, recorded also by Vincent of Beauvais, *Bibliotheca mundi* IV, book 30, chap. 147, p. 1283. The Tatars' decisive battle against the Turks was at Köse Dağ in northeast Anatolia, in June 1243. See below, §41.

[19] Akrop.'s first reference to Theodore II Laskaris, the emperor John's only son, as 'emperor' is above at §34, in the context of his betrothal to Helen at the age of 11.

[20] Pegai, on the sea of Marmara, was a major campsite and also a point of departure for many of the emperor John III's campaigns to the west. See §30, §41, §49, §84. Theodore may have been there in connection with an attack on Constantinople. See the discussion at §40.

[21] Akrop. refers to John Mouzalon in this passage only and very favourably, in contrast to George Mouzalon and his brothers (see §60 and Introduction, 24–7). John Mouzalon is the deacon, *mystikos*, and *epi tou kanikleiou* addressed by the patriarch Germanos (1223–40) in two homilies: ed. Lagopates, *Γερμανός ὁ Β Πατριάρχης*, 273–83; Angold, *Exile*, 161 n. 70; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 60 and n. 65. In the thirteenth century the *mystikos* ranked high (*pansebastos* in a letter dating to 1208–14: Oikonomides, 'Cinq actes', 125.4–5, 17–18; 129) but there is no evidence to show whether his functions were similar to pre-1204 holders of the title who were dispensers and regulators of imperial patronage mainly with regard to the church. See Magdalino, 'The not-so-secret functions of the mystikos', 229–40; cf. Angold, *Exile*, 161–2. For the Mouzalon family, see at §59.9.

[22] Michael Libadarios is mentioned by Akrop. only here. The last *megas hetaireiarches* was John Kammytzes (§24) who, like Libadarios, belonged to one of the noble and golden families, according to Pach. (I, 93.13 and 93 n. 12). For members of the Libadarios family in the later thirteenth century, see *PLP*, fasc. 6, nos 14858–62.

[23] For *pyramis*, see §11.15.

[24] For John, son of Theodore Komnenos Doukas, see §38.7, §39.20, §40.2. The account of the emperor John III's bestowal of the title of despot on John and John's loss of imperial status is related only by Akrop. (Skout. 488.6–25; Ephraim, 8470–5). This act is traditionally dated to 1242 (see Nicol, *Despotate*, 138–9; Ferjančić, *Despoti*, 62–3), based on Heisenberg's date in the

margin (at p. 65.25) for John III's expedition to Thessalonike. However, Akrop.'s own chronology for this expedition is 1241 (see §41), as Dölger-Wirth (*Regesten*, no. 1775, p. 36) acknowledge.

Until 1204, only imperial sons-in-law received the dignity of despot and they were regarded as heirs-apparent. The emperor John's bestowal of the title on John Komnenos Doukas was the first occasion on which an emperor of Nicaea granted the title of despot to a ruler of Epiros (see §42, §46, §49). The act was a departure from pre-1204 practice as it was not accompanied by a marriage alliance. For a discussion of the cases of the bestowal of the dignity in the thirteenth century, see Magdalino, 'A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese in the early thirteenth century', 320–1.

41. The emperor John arrived in the east. He then spent the winter season[1] in Nymphaion, as was his custom;[2] leaving from there, he went to the area of Lampsakos. There he spent the summer and the autumn season, but when winter set in, moving from the place, he left for the region of Pegai. He was tested by a great storm on the way which began when he encamped at Sigrene.[3] For two days, because of its ferocity and the violent force of the snow, he endured hardship, until he reached the town of Pegai. Many men died on the way, and many women; up to 300, as those who took count said, were buried by the snow, unable to withstand the force of the wind. People who experienced it said that they had never known such a winter. It was then the 18th of the month of December, in the 6741st [1232],[4] I think. The emperor passed the day in the town of Pegai until the worst of the storm abated and, leaving there, he went to Nymphaion and stayed there until the brightening of the spring.[5]

When, as we said, the army of the Muslims was destroyed by the Tatars,[6] a sultan, whose name was Iathatines, ruled them, a son of the sultan Azatines,[7] a bad leader who was born of a good one. For he took pleasure in drinking and licentiousness, in strange and unnatural sexual intercourse, and was always in the company of creatures who no longer knew reason or indeed anything of human nature. His father was not this sort, although he did give way to licentiousness, but not very much. For this reason Azatines was a better general than those before him and was kindly disposed towards the emperor. But Iathatines enjoyed to satiety whatever he took pleasure in and so he had tried to make battle with the Tatars and had been defeated.[8] Since he was in a difficult situation, he sent ambassadors to the emperor John, seeking to obtain the best advice from him so that he might turn back the adversary and be relieved of this burden a little, saying that this would be a salvation for both; for, if the Muslim people were destroyed by the

Tatars, the access to Roman territories would be left open to the enemy. This was certainly very true.

The emperor John, being skilful in matters of this kind, welcomed the embassy gladly and chose to unite with the sultan so that this might act to avert the enemy. For with two great leaders such as these joined together, it was likely that fear would be engendered in the enemy, since they would be fixing their aim on one enemy but would find themselves pitted against two at once. And so, having made preparations for this, both the emperor John and the sultan Iathatines met in the town of Tripolis[9] where the Maeander river flows. The sultan's men improvised a bridge of timber, making the crossing easy for those who wished. The leaders greeted each other in friendly fashion, as did the chief men of each, and they secured more strongly the agreements which they had from before, so that they might fight the enemy jointly;[10] they parted, the emperor turning back to Philadelphia,[11] the sultan to the city of the Iconians[12] where he had his capital. Then hostilities stopped for both. For the Tatar army kept to itself and was not on the move as was its custom; the Tatars were occupied with their own affairs.

§41 *Akrop. describes the emperor John III's movements upon his return to Asia Minor in the winter of 1241–2 and 1242–3. For the date, see §41.1. Akrop. appears not to have been with the emperor, from his reference to the 'people who experienced it . . .' The account is puzzling, as Akrop. does not say what the emperor did in Lampsakos and Pegai. His activity may have to do with an attempt on Constantinople. See §37, §40 and the Introduction, 100.*

A brief mention is made of a Turkish–Byzantine treaty (1243: see §41.5), after the Turkish defeat by the Mongols. For the Turks, see the Introduction, 92–4.

[1] The winter of 1241–2: see §40.1.

[2] Akrop. connects the emperor John with winter residence at Nymphaion (modern Kemalpaşa), here and at §47, thus giving rise to the idea that it was not until his reign that the 'empire of Nicaea' became a 'two-centre empire' with Nicaea and Nymphaion as imperial residences. See the Introduction, 87–8.

[3] From Akrop.'s description of the emperor's movements, it appears that Sigrene is the area between Lampsakos in the west and Pegai in the east: see §28 and Ramsay, *Historical Geography*, 162.

[4] This is one of three dates since the creation given by Akrop. in his narrative (see §4, §85 and Introduction, 42). As in the case of the date he gives for the fall of Constantinople, this date also is incorrect. The year must be 1242 (=6751) and not 1232 (=6741). Heisenberg attributes the error to a copyist's mistake, a substitution of a μ for a ν in the date ϛψνα=6751. See Heisenberg, *Opera* I, 306; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1774, p. 36.

[5] Spring 1243.

[6] See above at §40.18 where Akrop. refers to a victory of the Tatars over the Turks.

[7] Iathatines, the Greek transliteration for Ghiyath al-Din (Kaykhusraw II, 1237–45/6), was the son of Azatines, Ala al-Din Kaykubad I (1220–37) and grandson of Kaykhusraw I (1205–11). *EI* IV (1978), 816, 817; Cahen, *Formation*, 65–71. On Greek transliterations of Turkish names, see §8; Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 57, 112–13.

[8] Akrop. attributes the defeat at Köse Dağ (1243) to the sultan Kaykhusraw's moral decadence. All Muslims, including Mohammed, are characterized similarly by Byzantine writers. See, e.g., Anna Komnene, 10.5.13–17. Vincent of Beauvais likewise attributes the sultan's defeat to drink: *Biblioteca mundi* IV, book 30, chap. 150, p. 1284: *soldanus ebrius fuerat in nocte praecedenti et adhuc vino aestuabat quando primi bellatores fuerunt devicti.* Other sources describe the Turcoman revolts in central Anatolia in the reign of Kaykhusraw II which weakened the Seljuk state, leaving it unprepared for the Tatars. See Ibn Bibi, 216–20; Bar Hebraeus, ed. Budge, 405–6; Simon of St. Quentin, ed. Richard, 62–3; *EI* V (1986), 271–2.

[9] A letter of Theodore II Laskaris refers to Tripolis as the easternmost boundary of the 'Nicaean' empire: *Epistulae*, 57.33. The emperor John III rebuilt the fortress there according to Pach. (IV, 475.30–477.3). On the site and the Byzantine remains, see Foss, 'Late Byzantine fortifications in Lydia', 299–302.

[10] The treaty dates to the autumn of 1243 (Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1776, pp 36–7; Hendrickx, *Regestes*, nos 220–1, pp 142–3); Greg. I, 41.1–22. Akrop. refers to the strengthening of 'agreements which they had from before'. He last mentioned a treaty with the Turks in 1211, at the conclusion of the battle at Antioch-on-the-Maeander (§10). However, according to the Syrian chronicler, Ibn Natif, there was a more recent occasion on which a treaty had been contracted. In 1231, after two battles (1227, 1229), peace was arranged between the sultan and the emperor, 'because of the appearance of the Tatars'. See Cahen, 'Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu au XIII[e] siècle', 145–51. This could be the agreement 'which they had from before'. On Turkish–Nicaean relations, see the Introduction, 92–4.

[11] A frontier fortress (see Pach. I, 141.1–9) whose well-armed people were constantly prepared for war with the Turks. See §53.

[12] Iconium (Konya), capital of the Seljuks. See also §8.15.

42. Not long after, John, whom we mentioned before and who had been made despot by the emperor John, paid his debt.[1] He had a brother Demetrios who, having sent an embassy to the emperor, inherited the despotic rank of his

brother, and was enjoined to be master of[2] all the lands that had been subject to the deceased.[3] But he did not have brotherly thoughts like his brother John,[4] but differed to a large degree. For the deceased had taken pleasure in piety and reverence and temperance; those who knew his ways said that he would never allow one day of the year to pass without hearing the holy liturgy, unless some illness prevented him. He attended all-night prayers and filled all day with hymns at the appointed hours. He was forever conversing with Nazarenes,[5] and he made it his concern to participate as much as possible in the monastic life and to experience the tranquillity[6] that derives from it, rather than being simply well disposed to those who live this way. But his brother Demetrios had the opposite character. He associated with stupid youths and had much in common with them, and was licentious in sexual acts and frequented married women, with the result that a serious accident befell him once. For, when the husband of the adulterous woman suddenly entered the room, Demetrios tried to escape from the window, but fell from a great height and hurt his buttock. He was ill for a considerable time but he recovered, although he limped a little in one of his legs and did not walk evenly.[7]

But he did not enjoy power for long,[8] for the emperor John, taking advantage of the respite at that time—since, as we said, the Tatar race was occupied with other peoples and had abandoned the battle with the sultan of Iconium, pitching battle against the Babylonian, whom the tribes of the Muslims are accustomed to call 'caliph', and those around him[9]—crossed the Hellespont when the summer season came, leaving his son Theodore behind in the east.[10]

Some time earlier it happened that the patriarch Germanos left the things of this world and departed for the divine dwelling places, having lived a good and holy life and having tended his flock well.[11] After him a certain monk called Methodios became patriarch; he was the abbot of the Hyakinthos monastery in Nicaea, a man who boasted that he knew many things but who was knowledgeable in little. But he had benefit of the throne for three months only before he died.[12] The church was then without a bishop, for the emperor John, not being hasty in such matters, could not easily find the worthy person in a hurry,[13] or, rather, the one who was to his liking. For above all, rulers approve in these matters those who are pleasing to them, so as not to have anyone opposing their wishes. Therefore, much time passed and there was no one administering the flock.[14]

§42 *The account of Demetrios of Thessalonike, begun here, is continued in §45. Akrop. also brings up to date ecclesiastical matters, the patriarchal succession. For his characterization of patriarchal appointments, see the Introduction, 47–9.*

[1] John's death, 'not long after' the autumn 1243 treaty of the sultan and the emperor John, cannot be more precisely dated than late 1243 or 1244. Akrop. uses a great variety of phrases to refer to death: see the Introduction, 52 n. 320.

[2] Akrop. plays on the words δεσπότης, 'despot', and δεσπόζειν, 'to be master of'.

[3] The embassy of Demetrios (see §38) to the emperor and the bestowal of the dignity of despot on him, 'inherited' from his brother John (see §40), is dated to c. 1244 on the basis of Akrop.: Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1778, p. 37. No coins of the despot Demetrios survive (see Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 288–9), but a fourteenth-century inventory of charters from the monastery of Chilandari, Mt Athos, describes documents, no longer extant, issued by Demetrios as despot. See *Actes de Chilandar* I, nos 9, 39, 54, 55, pp 14–15.

[4] Akrop. plays on *adelphos* (Heis. 70.19), the kin term for a male sibling also used with reference to the spiritual kinship of the members of a religious community. Demetrios' brother John had a strong inclination for the monastic life. See at §42.5–6.

[5] For 'Nazarenes', 'monks', see Suidas, *Lexicon* II, ed. Adler, 434.

[6] Akrop. implies that John lived the life of a monk, experiencing *hesychia*, even though he lived a secular life.

[7] An example of Akrop.'s interest in the body, as well as his liking for 'amusing' stories, sometimes of a sexual nature: see the Introduction, 47, 52 and n. 317.

[8] This characterization of Demetrios and John is found only in Akrop. (Skout. 490.6–20; Ephraim, 8493–504). Skout. (490.20–1) introduces a nuance when he says that it was *because* of Demetrios' behaviour that he did not enjoy power for long. See below, §45, for Demetrios (c. 1244–6).

[9] Akrop. refers to Tatar raiding and sieges in the area of Baghdad, attested at the end of the caliphate of al-Mustansir (1226–42). See Rashid al-Din, *The successors of Genghis Khan*, trans. J. A. Boyle (New York, 1971), 190–1.

[10] This is the second time Akrop. mentions that Theodore II was left behind in the east. See also §40. The year is 1243.

[11] Akrop. limits his accounts of ecclesiastical matters to patriarchal appointments which he has inserted here because of the chronological relevance. For Germanos II, who died 'some time earlier', in 1240, see §33; Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §69; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 22 and n. 64; Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465C; Laurent, 'La chronologie', 136–7.

[12] Methodios was patriarch only a few months in 1241: see Laurent, 'La chronologie', 137–8. For his seal, see Oikonomides, *Dated Byzantine lead seals*, no. 133, pp 125–6. Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465D, repeats Akrop.'s judgement of him, whereas Skout. (491.1–3) omits it. See also Blem. (*Autobiographia* I, §69; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 82–3) for reference to the election of Methodios.

Blem. himself was suggested for the vacancy. See the Introduction, 48. For the Hyakinthos monastery, see §10. According to Xanthopoulos, Methodios was buried there.

[13] Akrop. plays on *πρόχειρος . . . ἐκ τοῦ προχείρου* (Heis. 72.3–4).

[14] Xanthopoulos (PG 147.465D) confirms that the patriarchal throne was vacant for 'some years'. Manuel II was appointed in 1243 (Laurent, 'La chronologie', 138–9). Akrop. later (§53) repeats the opinion that emperors choose as patriarchs men who do not oppose them. That this was not so much a general observation as one related specifically to the vacancy after the death of Methodios is shown by Pach. (I, 165.18–23) who records that the emperor John vetoed the synod's choice, saying of Nikephoros of Ephesos, 'If one can not bear him as an archdeacon, how will one be able to suffer him when he is a patriarch?' See the Introduction, 49.

43. The emperor John, as we said, made the journey[1] to the [land on the] other, western side,[2] in order to inspect the territory there and the towns in that area. He was master of everything as far as the town actually called Zichna,[3] somewhere near Serres. At that time, Asan's son, Kaliman, who was 12 years old, ruled the Bulgarians.[4] When the emperor arrived at the region of Kissos,[5] he spent the day there and continued the march on the following day, reaching the area of the Hebros river, which is called Maritza in rustic speech,[6] and which flows near the monastery named 'of Veros'.[7] When the emperor was in the middle of the river—it was fordable for the horses since it was the end of the summer, the third or fourth day of waning September[8]—a message was conveyed in a report sent by the man who held public command in Achridos,[9] that Kaliman, the ruler of the Bulgarians, had measured out his life. Some said that he had succumbed to a natural illness, others said otherwise, that he was killed by a draught secretly prepared to cause his death by those who were of contrary opinion to him. One way or the other, he died, and the report was true, for it was substantiated by continuous messages.

When the emperor learned this, he pressed forward and quickly reached Philippi,[10] passing by Christoupolis.[11] There he deliberated with his chosen men as to whether he should attack the territories of the Bulgarians and take some of the lands held by them and whether it was easy for us to conquer the town of Serres.[12] Some men dissuaded the emperor from battle against the Bulgarians. They said that he did not lead a battle-worthy army since it had not been prepared for battle but had set out only for inspection of his lands. Besides, the town of Serres, which would have to be attacked first, was impregnable because it is situated on a height, nor is it easy to surround with such an army, while it had proved impossible to set up siege towers against it. To attack and to be beaten off after the attempt would be shameful for the authority of the

Roman empire—for their repute in such matters was very great—and it was not now expedient to provoke the Bulgarians to battle, since they were at peace. This was the advice of those who were dissuading the emperor from the undertaking. But Andronikos Palaiologos, whom my account mentioned earlier as *megas domestikos*,[13] gave, rather, the opposite advice to the emperor:

> It is necessary to make an attempt on the town of Serres. If we should gain control of it, we would have no small gain; rather, Bulgarian affairs will be humbled and they will receive an embassy of goodwill more readily. Since their master is out of the way, yet another child is destined to rule the Bulgarians, Michael, born to Asan by Theodore Angelos' Eirene.[14] If it should happen that we do not prevail over the town, what will be the loss sustained by the empire of the Romans? Having made an attempt we shall be at rest and shall again send an embassy to the Bulgarians and they will receive it happily since they are ruled by an infant who does not know what war is about. Every man loves peace since he aims at repose.

It seemed to the emperor that the *megas domestikos* had given excellent advice, and so he started on the road to Serres as quickly as he could. When he was nearly there, he encamped and took up a position against it. He made his attempt on the city with strategy and stratagems, but certainly not with an army large enough for the task for, as we said, he did not have many men at that time. Now, since Serres was formerly a large city, but the Bulgarian John ruined it when he besieged it also along with the other cities of Macedonia, it was like a village at that time, with its acropolis alone surrounded by a wall and prepared to face battle.[15] Its guardian was a Bulgarian man, Dragotas by name, who lived at Melenikon.[16] Since the lower city of Serres was unfortified—for the devastated area was supposedly fortified all around by stones, but stones only, without any mortar, and not rising up to a height—the emperor assembled those who worked for the soldiers for a salary, whom the vulgar tongue calls *tzouloukones*,[17] and challenged them to gain control of it, since they were in need of provisions; for they had moved from their homes in order to have plenty of the necessities. When they saw that the place was easy to attack, they took their bows and their swords as well, and some boards which they improvised as shields and, holding these before them and raising the war cry, they advanced against the place at the first shout, and in a few hours they were within. They plundered the things which were to be found there. All those inside who had not managed to flee to the acropolis came forth as suppliants to the emperor. The ruler of the town, Dragotas, a Bulgarian man who was not at all trained in guarding a town for a long time, saw that the lower town[18] had been taken; he also learned of the death of his master. By good fortune he did not wait long before he sent an embassy to

the emperor. And the town forthwith acclaimed the emperor, while Dragotas donned a purple cloak woven with gold[19] and received a great quantity of gold coins. He made fine promises to the emperor on behalf of Melenikon and, what is more, they were genuine above measure.

§43 *Akrop. gives an account of the emperor John III's expedition to the 'west' in a detailed manner, in §43–6, reporting the events of three months, September–December 1246. (For the date, see §47.1.) He has left a gap in his narrative, jumping from the events of 1243 (see §42) to those of 1246. This is the only large gap in the* History. *Akrop. accompanied the emperor on this expedition, as he reveals at §44.12, 22. Yet the reader is alerted to his presence earlier, by the circumstantial detail which he conveys: see §43.8.*

[1] Akrop. uses *βάδον* for 'journey', taken from Aristophanes, Birds, 42, *τὴν βάδον βαδίζομεν*, while Skout. (491.9) substitutes *τὴν πορείαν*. See the Introduction, 67, for Skout.'s metaphrase of the *History.*

[2] For Akrop.'s use of 'west' to refer to the Balkans and, in part, the European territory of 'Nicaea', see §4.4, §8.1; the Introduction, 34. Kinn. (215.13–14) uses *ἑσπέραν* in the same way.

[3] Akrop. refers to Zichna—*οὕτω πως ὀνομαζομένου*—as he does to Holkos and Klyzomene. See §22.10 for an explanation of the expression. The etymology of Zichna is, however, not known. The town, to the southeast of Serres, is first mentioned in the thirteenth century by Henri de Valenciennes, also in connection with Serres ('Gige': §572–3 and nn 4, 5 (p. 62), §614, §619, §620). See Kravari, 'Nouveaux documents de monastère de Philothéou', fig. 2 (p. 282); N. Moutsopoulos, '*Τὸ Βυζαντινὸ κάστρο τῆς Ζίχνης*', *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρίδα τῆς Πολυτεχνικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Ἀριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης* 10 (1986), 163–338. It is here said to be the westernmost boundary of the emperor John's possessions. Above (§33), in his account of the joint campaign with Asan in 1235–6, Akrop. reports that the Hebros river was the westernmost boundary. In 1241 Rentine (§40), to the west of the Strymon, was added. Akrop. has not given an account of the conquest of the area between the Hebros and the Strymon rivers which he now states the emperor John had in his control. Consequently, we must infer that this area became his sometime between 1235/6 and 1241/2.

[4] For Kaliman (1241–6), Asan's son by his Hungarian wife, see §39, §40.

[5] For the fortress at Kissos, east of the Hebros river, see §33.

[6] Each time Akrop. introduces the non-classical name, Maritza, he comments on its form: see §33, §35.

[7] The monastery 'of Veros', dedicated to the Kosmosoteira, was founded in 1152 by the *sebastokrator* Isaac, son of Alexios I Komnenos, and is situated at Vera (modern Pherrai), 4–5 km from the west bank of the Hebros river. At the

time of the foundation the area was commonly known as *βηρός* (veros), as the typikon of the monastery states: Petit, 'Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosotira près d'Aenos (1152)', 20.30–1; ed. Papazoglou, §2, p. 36.43–5. Akrop. is exceptional in retaining this form of the name, while other sources (Chon. 280.34; 452.2; *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 269–70) use the form, Vera. The name, of Slavic origin, designates a '(fish) pond'. See Trapp, *Lexikon*, s.v. *βηρός*; Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 125 n. 5.

[8] Akrop. seems to be using the Athenian calendar, according to which the date would be 26 or 27 September, working backward from the end (*φθίνοντος . . . Σεπτεμβρίου*: Heis. 72.21) of the month: *OCD* (1970), 192–3. Cf. D. R. Reinsch, review of W. Blum, *Georgios Akropolites, Die Chronik*, in *BZ* 86/7 (1993–4), 124: 23 or 24 September. Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, nos 1788, 1789, p. 40, interpret the date as the 3 or 4 September. The river was fordable to the horses because the dry season in this region is from June to October. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 21. This kind of detail—'the emperor was in the middle of the river . . . when a message was conveyed'—betrays Akrop.'s presence which he reveals only later, in §44.

[9] I have emended Heis.'s *τῆς Ἀχριδῶν* (p. 72.24) to *τῆς Ἀχριδοῦ* which is in keeping with Akrop. elsewhere (§24, §59) and with Skout. (491.19) in this passage and elsewhere (518.31, 519.3). *Ἀχριδῶν* refers to the town Ochrid, seat of the bishopric—for this form see Pach. II, 433.4—whereas Achridos (*ἡ Ἀχριδός*, *τῆς Ἀχριδοῦ*) is the name of the region and theme comprising the central Rhodope mountains, extending to the Arda river valley. It was under the Bulgarian ruler: see also §24, §59; Chon. 409.38; Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 10, 244–5. That it was a theme is indicated by reference here to 'the man who held the public command in Achridos' and later, at §59, to 'Philanthropenos . . . left by the emperor to guard the fortresses in Achridos'. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 276.

[10] *τὴν Φιλίππους* is Philippi, not Philippopolis, as Heis. indicates in his 'Index', p. 365. Akrop. always gives Philippopolis in its full form (see §12, §13) and Philippi as *Φιλίππους* (§50). See Lemerle, *Philippes*, 173 n. 1; 184. Philippi appears to have been a military base for John III's armies in the 'west'. See also at §50 where Philippi is the place of Michael Palaiologos' trial for treason. For the army, see the Introduction, 97–9.

[11] Modern Kavalla: see above, §40.

[12] Only Akrop. (Skout. 491.24–492.1) relates this deliberation. Serres had been in the hands of the Bulgarians since 1230 (see §25), when Asan II took it from Theodore Komnenos Doukas (see §22).

[13] For Andronikos Palaiologos, mentioned several times before as *megas domestikos*, see §28, §36, §40. This is the first 'speech' in Akrop.'s narrative. Despite Akrop.'s presence on this expedition (see §43.8, §44.12), Andronikos

Palaiologos' advice to the emperor cannot be regarded as a true report of his words. See Macrides, 'George Akropolites' rhetoric', 204–5.

[14] Michael II Asan (1246–57), Asan's son by marriage to Eirene, daughter of Theodore Komnenos Doukas, was, at most, eight years old in 1246, since Asan married Eirene no earlier than 1237. See §38.1. A 'regency' of Eirene (1242–6) has been postulated, on the basis of silver coins representing Michael with Eirene (Mushmov, *Monetitie e pechatitie na bulgarskitie tsare*, 71–2) and wall paintings depicting son and mother at the church of the Taxiarchs, Kastoria (Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory inscriptions and donor portraits*, 95–6, figs 79–81). However, a 'regency' has now been called into question by a new reading of the inscription next to the portraits in the church at Kastoria. They are now said to represent Michael and his wife Anna (for her, see §62, §73); likewise, the coins have been reattributed. See Subotić, 'Portret nepoznate Bugarske tsaritse', 93–102; also Georgieva, 'The Byzantine princesses in Bulgaria', 170–5. For Michael, see also §54.

[15] Vill. (§§392–4) describes the fortress at Serres as 'very strong' before the 'Bulgarian John', Kalojan or Johanitsa, destroyed it in 1205. From Akrop.'s description it appears that Serres, before Johanitsa's attacks, was like Thessalonike and the large cities of the empire which preserved a distinction between the 'lower city'—*ἡ κάτω πόλις* (Heis. p. 74.25)—and the kastron on the acropolis. Each part had its own fortifications. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 141–2. Today there is no trace of the walls surrounding the lower part of the city. For the town's situation and the remains of the kastron see Xyngopoulos, *Ἔρευναι εἰς τὰ Βυζαντινὰ μνημεῖα τῶν Σέρρων*, 5, 10, 18–19, pl. 1.

[16] Dragotas was the military commander at Serres (see Ephraim, 8515–16: *φρουράρχης καὶ πρωτοστάτης*). For his name, see Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 120. For him see §44, §58. On Melenikon (Melnik), §24, §44. For Akrop.'s characterization of Bulgarians, see the Introduction, 90–2. Biliarsky, 'Les circonscriptions administratives en Bulgarie au 13^{e} siècle', 195–6, argues that Dragotas had both Serres and Melnik under his authority. Although later under Byzantine rule the two towns are combined under the military command of one person (see §46, §57), this does not appear to have been the case when Serres and Melnik were in Bulgarian control. See §44.2 for Litovoes.

[17] The etymology of the name 'tzouloukones' is debated. The word appears in Akrop. (Skout. 492.26) and Apokaukos (Pétridès, 'Jean Apokaukos, Lettres et autres documents inédits', 15: *Εἰ δὲ τζουλούκων ἦν ἢ κελλαρίτης, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον αὐτοῦ ἦν, τὸ δὲ δεύτερον ἐμὴ μεσιτεία*). Akrop. does not label the word as foreign (cf. §85.12) but as 'vulgar' or spoken idiom; it would thus appear that the word had become incorporated into the spoken language. Heis. gives it a Slavic derivation, 'sluga'=servus (*Opera* I, p. 307), from F. Miklosich, *Lexicon Palaeoslovenico-Graeco-Latinum* (Darmstadt, 1963),

859. H. Köpstein, *Antichmaia drevnost i srednie veka* (Sverdlovsk, 1973), 161–6, esp. 164, finds this derivation phonetically unsatisfactory and prefers the Turkish kullukçu, '(formerly) Janissary stationed at a guard-house, subaltern in the Janissaries': H. C. Hony, *A Turkish–English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1954). A possible derivation is from the Turkic çoluk, çoçuk: 1. household, family, wife and children; 2. children, pack of children. See H. C. Hony and Fahir Iz, *The Oxford Turkish–English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1984); *New Redhouse Turkish–English Dictionary* (Istanbul, 1968), 259. Servants of the soldiers are mentioned again below (§59) but with no other designation.

[18] The 'lower town' refers to the *κάτω πόλις* (Heis. p. 74.25), at the foot of the hill, below the fortified acropolis, itself not fortified, according to Akrop.

[19] This would have been a material woven with purple and gold threads rather than a purple textile embroidered with gold. Gold-figured embroidery 'came into vogue' only in the Palaiologan period. Apart from two late twelfth-century pieces, the earliest embroideries date from the reign of Andronikos II. It has been argued that embroidered fabrics were developed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as economic substitutes for woven textiles. See Talbot, *The Correspondence of Athanasius I*, 377.

44. Dragotas received all these things from the emperor and departed, having been set as bait. When he reached Melenikon, he would make everything manifest to the settlers[1] and arouse them to betray the town to the emperor, not saying these things openly but secretly taking counsel about this with the majority. Since the man who was in charge of governing the town, Nicholas Litovoes,[2] was ill and bedridden[3] because of pain in his feet, all were free to do whatever they wished. Now since Nicholas Manglavites,[4] one of the most prominent among the inhabitants of Melenikon, an energetic man and one capable of adapting himself to changing circumstances, detected Dragotas' plan and knew that he would be able to effect the things promised to the emperor, he assembled the greater part of the population and, spurning secrecy, he openly proposed to all the expedient thing to do, saying,

> We had to put up with the rule of the child, Kaliman,
> and it was our hope that he would reach manhood and we would have recompense from him for our misery when he came of age and was able to distinguish a good man from a bad one. Since by bad luck we were deprived of this and we have the prospect of another new-born child to rule over the Bulgarians, we might seem worse than complete fools if we were to give ourselves up to further ill luck, choosing to spend a whole lifetime without a master, a situation from which many greater sufferings arise. But since the emperor of the Romans has approached us, we ought to entrust ourselves to him, a trustworthy master and one who knows a bad man from a good one and who

> has a long-standing right with regard to us. For our land belongs to the empire of the Romans—the Bulgarians acted with greed and came to possess Melenikon—and we all originate from Philippopolis, pure Romans by birth. Besides, the emperor of the Romans truly has a right with respect to us, even if we are related to Bulgarians, for his son, the emperor Theodore, became the son-in-law of the emperor of the Bulgarians, Asan, and now the daughter of the emperor Asan, the wife of this emperor, is called, and is in deed, empress[5] of the Romans.
>
> For all these reasons, then, leaving aside all talk we should go to him and bend our necks under the yoke of submission. For the yoke of sensible and mature emperors is good and lighter by far than that of those who are still youths.[6]

With these words he persuaded them all, without toil or much trouble, to become the emperor's subjects.[7] They sent as ambassadors some of their fellow settlers, supposedly in secret, but probably known to most, and they made agreements with the emperor. A chrysobull[8] was produced by the emperor which included their requests, and it was given to the ambassadors with the enjoinder that it should be dispatched to the inhabitants of Melenikon.

Not long after, all gathered together with one accord—those who were the chief men, those enrolled in the army and, generally, those inhabitants who are of the better sort;[9] they went to the emperor who was encamped in a place actually called Valavisda.[10] They were well turned-out and honourable men, worthy of respect and regard by their appearance alone, over 500 in number.[11] Upon seeing them I exclaimed,[12] 'What battle brought them over to our side, or how many contingents of cavalrymen overcame men such as these?' But even that which is almost impossible is easy with the Almighty. From this it is clear that what the apostle Paul said is true, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.'[13] Therefore one must neither wholly praise nor censure the general. For some people have waged war both zealously and earnestly, dealing with the matters at hand most energetically, but have accomplished little or nothing; some have even failed completely. Others, who have been allotted good fortune, have proceeded in their actions unprepared and have produced great victories on their own, as happened at that time to the emperor John also. For he became master of many towns and many lands instantly, without war occurring, or anyone falling in battle, or shedding of blood, or sword dancing in triumph over body; he ruled over all these places without toil, calmly and tranquilly, just as if this were some inheritance which was his from his father.[14] For Stenimachos, Tzepaina[15] and the fortresses and village-towns that lie beside the Rhodope mountains became subject to him, and the Hebros river was the boundary between him and the Bulgarians. In the region towards the north, Stoumpion,[16] Chotovos,[17] and some other strongholds, as well as the area of Velevousdion,[18] Skopje,[19] and

Veles[20] were under the emperor. As far as Prilep, and the lands of Pelagonia, Neustapolis, and Prosek, everything was subject to the emperor.[21]

A treaty was made between the Bulgarians and the emperor with respect to this, stating that he would be satisfied with these places alone and would not go beyond. Events took this turn while I myself assisted in the writing of letters, composing an imperial document for each of the towns and territories which had been won. For this is an old custom among the emperors of the Romans, to make their own accomplishments known to those who are far away through letters, and to awaken in them pleasure through the deeds in which they also have a share.[22]

§44 *Akrop. continues the narrative on the emperor John's 1246 campaign, here giving an explanation of the manner in which Melnik and many other towns in Macedonia became 'Nicaean' possessions.*

[1] Akrop. later reveals why he describes the people who lived in Melnik as ἔποικοι, 'settlers', instead of 'inhabitants'. One of these settlers is Manglavites who reminds the people of Melnik that they all come from Philippopolis and were moved to Melnik by the Bulgarian ruler Asan. See at §44.6.

[2] Litovoes, a Slavic name meaning 'brave warrior', first appears in Kekaumenos (172.31; 429 n. 424). Chon. (430.27) also mentions a Litovoes who, although from the 'barbarian army', was taken into the Byzantine army and took part in Isaac II's campaign against the Vlach–Bulgars in 1190–1. The family's connection with Melnik is confirmed by a document of 1323 which refers to the property there of a (deceased) Litovoes: *Actes de Vatopédi* I, no. 60, 325–6, esp. 325.11. See below also at §44.19.

[3] Akrop. uses the same expression at §29.5, τῇ κλίνῃ. . .προσπεπατταλευμένος (Heis. p. 47.1), literally, 'nailed to the bed', to describe his bedridden father.

[4] The name Manglavites derives from the μαγλαβίται, bodyguards of the emperor mentioned from the eighth to the eleventh centuries. See Oikonomides, *Les Listes de préséance*, 328. As a surname it is attested from the eleventh century on. For Nicholas Manglavites' lead seal, see V. Laurent, 'Mélanges d'épigraphie grecque et de sigillographie byzantine', *EO* 31 (1932), no. 14, p. 443. For the man, see also below §50.4. For property of a Manglavites at Skopje, see §44.19. A 1319 chrysobull of Andronikos II for Chilandari refers to the property of a George Manglavites in the Vardar valley: *Actes de Chilandar* I, no. 34, p. 237.197–8.

[5] Akrop. has Manglavites refer to Helen, Asan's daughter, as *despoina*, the word which designates the wife of an emperor. See also at §52 (Heis. 104.9) for reference to the empress Anna as *despoina*. Above, at §34.2, Akrop. refers to Helen as βασιλίς. For Theodore II's status as co-emperor at least from the time of his betrothal to Helen, see the Introduction, 39–40.

[6] The speech which Akrop. puts in the mouth of Manglavites is a set piece, containing pro-Roman and Nicaean sentiments. See Angold, 'Byzantine "Nationalism" and the Nicaean empire', 49–70; Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 54–5. His arguments also contain verifiable points: (1) Melnik had been in Byzantine hands from Basil II's time until the end of the twelfth century; (2) when Philippopolis was conquered and destroyed by the Vlach John (Kalojan) in 1205, many of its inhabitants were enslaved and transferred to other places (see §13; Vill. §401); (3) Asan's daughter Helen had married Theodore II Laskaris over 10 years earlier (§33).

[7] Because of its location, 'a most secure fortress, built on a rock and surrounded on all sides by cliffs and chasms' (Skyl. 351.83–7), the only means of conquest was by persuasion. This was demonstrated when Basil II took Melnik. He sent Sergios, a man noted for his powers of speech, who, using 'many persuasive arguments', made the people surrender the fortress: Skyl. 351.83–92.

[8] No chrysobull issued by a Nicaean emperor before 1259 is preserved in the original.

[9] The phrase 'all the inhabitants who are of the better sort' seems to correspond to *οἱ κρείττονες* or *οἱ κρείττονες οἰκοδεσπόται*, the prominent inhabitants of a village, the heads of village peasant families who were responsible for, and made judgements about, land tenure. See MM IV, 81, 82 (a document of 1251), 259, and Ostrogorsky, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité*, 75, 77; Charanis, 'On the social structure and economic organization of the Byzantine empire in the thirteenth century and later', 94–153, here at 122–3, 142.

[10] Valavisda (modern Siderokastron) is 28 km northwest of Serres. See Anna Komnene, 12.4.14–15; *VV* 20 (1913), suppl.=*Actes de Philothéou*, 25.39–40: *εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν βουνῶν τοῦ Μελενίκου ἐν τῷ κατεπανικίῳ Βαλαβίστης* (*anno* 1346). Akrop.'s use of the phrase introducing the name Valavisda, 'a place actually called', is in other cases (see at §22.10, §30.1: Holkos; §68.8: Siderokastron; §84.4: Klyzomene) an indication that the place name is taken from a characteristic of the place. Unlike Holkos and Klyzomene, the name Valavisda is of Slavic origin. See Vasmer, *Die Slaven*, no. 10, p. 22. Its etymology has not been discussed. I have, however, retained the translation 'actually called' for *οὕτω πως* (Heis. 77.20) in this case also.

[11] The number 500 appears to be a standard figure Akrop. gives when the exact number cannot be remembered or determined. See below, §59.

[12] Akrop. directly reveals his presence on this expedition here for the first time, and below at §44.22. See the Introduction, 44–6, for a discussion of the author's direct intervention in the narrative.

[13] Romans 9.16. Akrop. has not cited the passage exactly.

[14] All the towns Akrop. lists here, from east to west, from the Hebros river to the Strymon and Vardar valleys, became the emperor John's through negotiation, not warfare. For Akrop.'s reflections on good fortune and the role of divine intervention in war, see also §36, and the Introduction, 55. The sentiments expressed here are similar to those voiced by Michael VIII in his speech upon the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261: §86; Pach. I, 209–13, esp. 211.14–26.

[15] Stenimachos (modern Asenovgrad), 20 km to the southeast of Philippopolis, and Tzepaina (modern Çepino) to the west of Stenimachos, are in the northern Rhodope region. Alexios Slav ruled at Tzepaina independently, sometime before 1220, before moving to Melnik. See §24.8, 9. Stenimachos may also have been in his control, at least until 1230. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 162–6, 170–3. For the remains at Stenimachos and Tzepaina, see Končev and Stoilov, 'La forteresse d'Asên', 20–54 and Končev, 'La forteresse TZEPAINA—Cepina', 285–304.

[16] The site of Stoumpion is uncertain. Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 43 and n. 103, identifies it with Štip in the Vardar valley, while Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 5, 35, 37, makes an identification with Stob in the Strymon valley. As rendered by Akrop. the place name is closer in form to Stob in Bulgaria, than Stip in FYROM.

[17] Dragoumis, '*Ἐπανόρθωσις*', 208, identifies Chotovos with Otovica, 6–7 km north of Veles, in the Vardar valley. See also Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 43 and n. 103; 46, fig. 4; 103. Chotovos can be identified with modern Hotovo, in the Strymon valley. Akrop.'s 'Chotovos' is closer to the modern Bulgarian place name than to Otovica.

[18] Velevousdion (Velbŭzd, modern Küstendil; ancient Pautalia), in the Strymon valley. For the toponym, from ancient to modern times, see Salać, 'La ville de Pautalie dans l'oeuvre de Procope *ΠΕΡΙ ΚΤΙΣΜΑΤΩΝ*', 131–4.

[19] Skopje, in the Vardar river valley, mentioned as a theme in the sources of the period (Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 93.5; *Epistulae*, 281.71) had come into Asan's control in 1230 after the battle at Klokotnitza. See Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 160–4; map p. 44. A chrysobull of 1299/1300 issued by Stephen Uroš II (Milutin) in favour of the monastery of St George near Skopje mentions, among the properties donated, fields of Manglavites, (Kosta) Litovoes, Dragotas and Akropolites. See Grujić, 'Tri Hilendarske povelje', 1–26, here at 8 (XIII): Manglavites; 12: Kosta Litovoes; 13 (XXVIII): Akropolites; 15 (XXXIII): Dragotas. The coincidence of these names has led M. Laskaris ('Cinq notes à la *πρόνοια* de M. Ostrogorskij', 265–8) to conjecture that these were lands given as rewards by the emperor John III to those who were involved in the submission of Melenikon and the other towns listed here

in 1246. For more sceptical comments see Ostrogorsky, 'Sur la pronoia. À propos de l'article de M. Lascaris', 161–3; see also the Introduction, 17.

[20] Veles (modern, formerly Titov Veles, now Veles) in the Vardar valley may also have been taken by Asan after Theodore Komnenos Doukas' defeat in 1230. It changed hands several times after 1246: see §49, §58; also Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 171–3.

[21] As Akrop. stipulates that the emperor John's possessions went 'as far as' the towns mentioned here, it is to be supposed that Prilep and Pelagonia (modern Bitola), Prosek on the Vardar, and Neustapolis (Ovče Polje: see §59), the region between Skopje and Štip, were under the Komneno-Doukai. This was certainly the case with Prilep and Pelagonia: see §46. For Prosek and Neustapolis see Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 45 n. 115; 149–50. For the form of the name Neustapolis, see §59.6.

[22] Heis. (*Opera* II, p. vii) thinks that the 'imperial documents' Akrop. drew up for 'each of the towns and territories' are chrysobulls. Akrop.'s own description, however, shows that the purpose of these documents was not to grant privileges to the newly acquired towns but rather to announce victories. He is referring to imperial newsletters, known both from descriptions and from surviving examples. See Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 313–14. Theodore I Laskaris sent such letters, according to the Latin emperor Henry, to announce his victory over the Turks in 1211: '*Qua de causa Lascarus acrior et elatior factus misit lit[te]ras ad omnes Grecorum provincias, continentes honorem et lucrum sue victorie*....' (ed. Prinzing, 'Der Brief', 414.90–415.92; 406). The emperor Theodore II Laskaris likewise sent to his subjects 'in the east' a letter announcing his victory over the Bulgarians and the terms of the peace settlement (*Epistulae*, 279–82). Before 1204 such letters were usually sent to the emperor's subjects in Constantinople: see Chon., *Orationes*, 6, 7.8–11. However, Akrop.'s letters are for the *newly acquired* territories. These places had once been Byzantine lands but had been taken by the Bulgarians after the Fourth Crusade. Thus, the emperor John's letters were sent to inform former Byzantine subjects of his success, i.e. their return to Byzantine hands. See §49 and the Introduction, 21, for Akrop.'s position at this time.

45. When these things had been accomplished in this way by the emperor, they were the cause of great pleasure to him but also, no less, to all Romans, who saw an increase in power and an expansion of the empire. It was the emperor's plan to turn his attention to the homeward journey and to return to the east, for the season also required this; the month of October had passed and November was nearly half over.[1] But a good and very advantageous reason checked his setting off. Thessalonike, as we related earlier, recognized

Theodore's son Demetrios as despot and gave him this name; for he had been given the honour of despot also by the emperor.[2] But, as we have said already concerning him, the youth was reckless and fit to occupy himself only with childish pastimes and juvenile playthings,[3] not indeed to be in charge of sensible men or to rule a state and be in lawful command;[4] therefore, some men prepared a plot against him. Of these men,[5] those who were notable and known were Spartenos[6] and Kampanos,[7] Iatropoulos[8] and Koutzoulatos,[9] while the distinguished ones were Michael Laskaris[10] and Tzyrithon, whom the emperor John honoured as *megas chartoularios*.[11] Other participants in the plot are not known, since they became privy to the matter with the crowd[12] but remained unknown to most people. At any rate, all those who were conspiring sent one of those mentioned, Kampanos, to the monarch John on the pretext of business but, in reality, to obtain a chrysobull of public interest comprising the customs and rights which from the beginning were attached to Thessalonike,[13] and providing for their own freedom. The emperor did everything in accordance with their aims and even put into writing promises of gifts for those who were to assist in the deed.[14]

When the emperor had arranged these things securely, he left the region of Melenikon and went to Thessalonike, dispatching ambassadors ahead to Demetrios so that, in accordance with his pledge, he might come to him and acquit himself of his debt;[15] for he had made an agreement to this effect, and sworn an oath. But he—for he was not able to think for himself—consulted his scheming advisers and was persuaded to remain at home; for they told him that the summons of the emperor was an intrigue against him. As he was light-witted, he was carried along by their words in whatever direction they might incline.

Something happened in this affair which I will give as an accompaniment to the account, like a kind of relish.[16] When he returned from the emperor some people reported Kampanos for not having Demetrios' interests in mind; we mentioned earlier that he was one of the accomplices in the plot. He appeared before Demetrios and was accused by those who were telling the truth about him, saying that 'he is secretly acting deceitfully and is making trial of the people, and letters are being sent from him to the emperor, and cryptic messages are being passed'. Kampanos was before this inquiry.

Now when Spartenos, being a co-initiate of the things that were being done, learned about this, he took himself quickly thither and, with as much breath and zeal as he had, said, 'What accusations, lord, are people making against this offender who, if he were convicted, would be judged worthy of many deaths?' And Demetrios, who had a great deal of confidence in him, considering him trustworthy and, in the words of the comic poet, 'most well-disposed' if not also 'most thieving',[17] replied, 'Those who are accusing him

say, Spartenos, that he is a traitor.' Spartenos struck Kampanos very hard on the cheek with his wrist and, taking hold of him by the beard, said, 'I will take him home, master, and when I have first exhausted him with afflictions, I will force him to divulge all that he has secretly done.' He said this and went home as quickly as he could.

From that day on Kampanos had a couch and a thick mattress for relaxation and all the things that have been invented for pleasure and in which men who have studied to get hold of such things take particular pleasure. Some people said that Spartenos inflated a skin pouch with air, tied it so that all the air was sealed in and there was no leak, then hung it up and beat Kampanos, supposedly, with sticks, torturing him to reveal the secrets.[18] But it was the skin pouch, not Kampanos, that was being beaten. When sufficient time had passed, time capable of producing a worthy examination and of revealing unspoken things embedded in the deepest recesses, Spartenos went to Demetrios as quickly as his legs could take him and said to him, 'Master, I will affirm the matter by oath, by your Demetrios and the Demetrios of us all, the guardian and protector of Thessalonike'[19]—this oath has more force for the people of Thessalonike than the others—'Kampanos is the same kind of man as Spartenos, and is of the same disposition towards you as Spartenos who you know loves you more than all other men.' In this way Spartenos schemingly diverted attention away from the intrigue which was to be detected in the future.

The emperor John, leading away his armies, left for Thessalonike straightway and encamped near it. He could not besiege it, for he did not have sufficient forces for this, but he sent an embassy and asked for Demetrios to come out to him, as had been sworn to him and, in addition, to set up a market outside Thessalonike[20] so that the army would be able to buy the necessities. But Demetrios, relying on treacherous advisors, agreed to do none of these things.

A very few days had passed. A small part of the army was stationed by the small gate named after its location by the sea,[21] lest any inhabitants of the city come out unexpectedly and harm members of the army. Suddenly a shout came from the gate that it had been opened by certain of those who were inside. The force that was keeping watch followed the shout and the whole army equipped itself and, together with the ruler, went in and in a moment Thessalonike had all the emperor's men within her walls. The emperor stood by the gate of the city which looks towards the east.[22] Demetrios' sister, Eirene,[23] the wife of Asan of the Bulgarians, came before him, falling on her knees and imploring loudly that her brother not suffer the loss of his eyes. Demetrios had already gone up to the acropolis. When she received sworn assurances from the emperor that he would not lose his sight, she went to her

brother and brought him out to the emperor. He was a young man in age, just at the start of manhood, for he did not yet have the first down on his chin; he was graceful in form and stature. The emperor honoured her by assuming a posture of humility like hers; for when she dismounted from her horse the emperor then also descended from his own carriage and stood on foot with her.

The city of Thessalonike thus became subject to the emperor John[24] or, rather, to the Romans; for those who had ruled her were opposed to the Romans.[25]

§45 *Akrop. continues the story of Demetrios which he began at §42, giving a long account of the conspiracy in Thessalonike that brought about Demetrios' downfall in 1246. The men named by Akrop. as conspirators, but especially Spartenos and Kampanos, show close connections and collaboration both during the conspiracy and long after. Spartenos and Kampanos possessed a joint lead seal and owned property in the village of Lozikion: see §45.6, 7. The property, like the title* sebastos, *may have been 'gifts' of the emperor John III for their part in delivering Thessalonike to him. The details Akrop. gives here and especially towards the end of the narrative, §45.21–3, indicate that he was present on this campaign.*

[1] Autumn of 1246: see the discussion at §47.

[2] On Demetrios and his despotic rank, see §42.

[3] For the phrase 'juvenile playthings', μειρακιώδεις ἀθυρμούς, see Blem., *Autobiographia*, §78.2 (p. 80). For Blem.'s influence on Akrop., see the Introduction, 47 and n. 282.

[4] Akrop.'s phrase, νομίμως ἐπιστατεῖν, 'preside lawfully' over a state, is a variation of ἔννομος ἐπιστασία 'lawful dominion', an attribute of the imperial office. On this concept, see Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I Komnenos', 122.10; 172 and n. 155.

[5] Akrop. distinguishes between the known and named conspirators and the unnamed and hidden. Among the former were Spartenos, Kampanos, Iatropoulos, Koutzoulatos and 'distinguished men', Michael Laskaris and Tzyrithon.

[6] Nothing is known of Demetrios Spartenos before the events related here, in contrast to the period after 1246 when the activities of Spartenos and other members of his family are documented. In 1256 Spartenos was sent by the emperor Theodore II on an embassy to pope Alexander IV: Haluscynskyj and Wojnar, *Acta*, p. 49; Schillmann, 'Zur byzantinischen Politik Alexanders IV', 110, 118, n. c; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1835, p. 52. In 1262, along with Kampanos, he was responsible for an apographe of the theme of Thessalonike. In the same year they issued together a praktikon for the monastery of Iviron.

Their joint lead seal appended to the praktikon refers to Spartenos as *sebastos*: *Actes d'Iviron* III, no. 59, pp 96–103; Oikonomides, *Dated Byzantine lead seals*, no. 137, pp 129–30. In an act of Chilandari (1265), in which his three sons cede their land at Lozikion, Chalkidike, to this monastery, Spartenos is mentioned as deceased. That he also owned land at Lozikion is known from this act and from a fourteenth-century inventory of Chilandari: *Actes de Chilandar* I, no. 7 (1265), 124, 125. The family's long-standing importance in Thessalonike is attested by several documents. Spartenos' son John was *prokathemenos* of Thessalonike, according to a will of 1284 and a document of 1290: *Actes de Lavra* II, no. 75. *Actes d'Iviron* III, no. 65, p. 125. Demetrios Spartenos' grandson (?), Demetrios, is referred to as *pansebastos sebastos* and *oikeios* of the emperor in 1304: *Actes de Lavra* II, no. 98, pp 135–41. On the family, see Živojinović, 'Spartini prilog prosopographiji', 177–84.

[7] Ephraim (8555) singles out Kampanos among the conspirators, characterizing him as a Sisyphos. Nicholas Kampanos is known from the *praktikon* for Iviron which he issued in 1262 with Spartenos, and from their joint seal. He is called *sebastos* and *prokathemenos* of Thessalonike in the praktikon. See *Actes d'Iviron* III, 103, 116–18; Oikonomides, *Dated Byzantine lead seals*, no. 138, pp 129–30. Like Spartenos, Kampanos is known to have held property at Lozikion: *Actes de Chilandar* I, no. 62, p. 16. He is probably the same Nicholas Kampanos, *pansebastos*, who was a signatory, along with Michael Laskaris, of a decision (1239/40?) by a bishop of Hierissos concerning a property dispute: *Actes de Vatopédi* I, no. 14, 131, 134.79.

[8] The Iatropoulos of this conspiracy is not otherwise known. A Demetrios Iatropoulos, *prokathemenos* of Philadelphia, is addressed in a letter by Theodore II: *Epistulae*, 197. Another Demetrios Iatropoulos, who was *logothetes ton oikeiakon* from at least 1260, was active in Constantinople thereafter: Pach. I, 175.17–18; 483.16–17 (1273); 657.2–3 (1282). He is also mentioned in an act for the monastery of Xeropotamou in 1275, as *logothetes ton oikeiakon*: *Actes de Xéropotamou*, 92.21; 93.59. In 1290, again as *logothetes ton oikeiakon*, he sat in judgement in the narthex of St Demetrios, Thessalonike: *Actes d'Iviron* III, 124; 125.1; *PLP*, fasc. 4, 7968.

[9] The name appears also as Kounsoulatos: Ephraim (8554). A Peter Kounsoulatos is active in Thessalonike later in the century, in 1284 as witness to the will of Theodore Kerameas in Thessalonike (*Actes de Lavra* II, no. 75, p. 30.11), and in 1290, as one of the *megalodoxotatoi* sitting in judgement in the church of St Demetrios, Thessalonike (*Actes d'Iviron* III, no. 65, p. 125.4–5). The time difference is too great to allow an identification with the Thessalonican conspirator.

[10] Michael Laskaris, whom Akrop. describes as one of the 'distinguished' conspirators, has been identified with the brother of the emperor Theodore I

Laskaris (see *Actes d'Iviron* III, 89), whom Akrop. later (§55) brings into the narrative, saying that he was 'old' in the reign of Theodore II (1254–8). According to Akrop., Michael left Asia Minor in 1221 when John III came to the throne, and travelled, becoming acquainted with various places and rulers. A chrysobull of 1259 and a praktikon of 1262 refer to the property which Michael Laskaris formerly held at Hierissos and which was given to the monastery of Iviron (*Actes d'Iviron* III, 92.87; 99.63–4). A *semeioma* of 1239/40 (?) to which he is a signatory along with Nicholas Kampanos (see §45.7) mentions him as *panendoxotatos*: *Actes de Vatopédi* I, no. 14, 134.78. Sometime after 1246, Michael returned to Asia Minor where, in the reign of Theodore II, he was given a military command in Thessalonike: §66, §68, §70, §71.

[11] It is not clear whether the Tzyrithon mentioned here can be identified with Constantine Tzyrithon, *megalodoxotatos*, who held property in Epiros while Apokaukos was metropolitan of Naupaktos, 1199/1200–32 (Pétridès, 'Jean Apokaukos, lettres et autres documents inédits', 19–20) or with a Tzyrithon with property in Bare, near Smyrna, who was deceased by 1250 (MM IV, 215–16; Dölger, 'Chronologisches und prosopographisches zur byzantinischen Geschichte des 13. Jahrhunderts', 314–15 n. 8; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 177. See V. Laurent, 'Légendes sigillographiques et familles byzantines', *EO* 30 (1931), 473–7, for a list of members of the family.

For the title *megas chartoularios*, which it appears the emperor John bestowed on Tzyrithon as a 'gift' for his services (on this, see §45.14), see §40.16 where John Petraliphas is said to have held the title in 1241.

[12] The text is corrupt here (Heis. 79.28). Bases (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii) has proposed *ὥς αὐτοῖς συνίσασι* in place of Heis.'s text, *ὥς αὐτοὶ σφίσι*. I suggest *ὥς αὐτοὶ συνίστοροι τοῦ πράγματος*.

[13] Both Vill. (§280) and Chon. (599.35–40) refer to the 'old' rights and customs of the inhabitants of Thessalonike which Baldwin had to confirm before its citizens would surrender the city. These 'rights', probably fiscal immunities, are older than the period of the Latin empire. See, however, Patlagean, 'L'immunité des Thessaloniciens', 591–601, here 592–3.

[14] Only in the case of Tzyrithon (see §45.11) does Akrop. specify the gift made by the emperor John—the dignity of *megas chartoularios*. It can be inferred from documents that other conspirators also were given titles and land (§45.6, 7, 10). Land was a reward for those responsible for the surrender of Melnik: see §44. Some of the conspirators remained in Thessalonike after 1246, carrying out administrative duties (Kampanos and Spartenos), while others went to Asia Minor (Michael Laskaris).

[15] According to Skout. (495.17–18) and Ephraim (8567–70), the emperor John expected Demetrios to come to him, in accordance with their

agreements, to make obeisance (Ephraim). Akrop., however, suggests more through his use of the Roman law terms for 'pledge' (*ὑποθήκας*) and debt (*ὄφλημα*): Heis., p. 80.12, 13; *ODB* II, s.v. hypothec. He implies that Thessalonike had, by their previous agreement, been pledged to the emperor John who had the right of possession, although Thessalonike had remained with Demetrios, the debtor. Certainly the bestowal of the dignity of despot on Demetrios by the emperor implied Demetrios' acceptance of the emperor's superior authority. But Akrop.'s choice of legal terminology delineates Demetrios' position more clearly. For Akrop.'s use of legal terms see the Introduction, 52.

[16] See the Introduction, 52, for a discussion of Akrop.'s story-telling.

[17] Akrop.'s citation from Plut. 25–7 is not exact. He substitutes 'the most well-disposed' (*εὐνούστατον*) for Aristophanes' 'truest' (*πιστότατον*).

[18] Heis., p. 81.22: *τὰ κρύφα* has been emended to *τὰ κρύφια*. See Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii.

[19] For St Demetrios, patron saint of Thessalonike, see §13.19. On the saint's political significance for the Komneno-Doukai in Epiros in the thirteenth century see Macrides, 'Subversion and loyalty in the cult of St Demetrios', 189–97.

[20] The lower city is meant, outside the walls. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 142.

[21] Skout. (496.30) says that the gate was named 'Small'. This gate has not been identified. See Gounares, *Τὰ τείχη τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης*, 34–5, who situates the gate in the wall of the harbour.

[22] Akrop.'s presence on this occasion is felt through the details he gives in this passage. See also above, §44.12.

[23] Eirene, daughter of Theodore Komnenos Doukas, wife of Asan II, and mother of Michael Asan, is not mentioned again after this incident. See above, §38.1, §43.14. She is known to have become a nun: Georgieva, 'The Byzantine princesses in Bulgaria', 171.

[24] For coins attributed to the period shortly after the Nicaean conquest of Thessalonike, in December 1246, see Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 290–4, and pl. 42.

[25] Akrop.'s statement that the Komneno-Doukai were opposite- or contrary-minded to the Romans, that is, that they were not themselves Romans, is an extreme Nicaean point of view. On this see the Introduction, 94–5.

46. The emperor remained in Thessalonike a very few days, for the winter season made him hasten. It was the month of December.[1] Leaving in the city the *megas domestikos* Andronikos Komnenos Palaiologos,[2] whom we have often mentioned—first among those appointed to command, a most

intelligent and gentle[3] man, well-acquainted with arming for battle and governing people in times of war and peace—he returned to the east a victor, marvelled at by all and celebrated for so speedy and great a victory, not only by his own people but also by foreigners. For the achievement and the accumulation of trophies seemed to be beyond natural order and to have been accomplished by the providence of God rather than by strategic methods. To guard Melenikon and Serres and the lands around them he left the eldest son of the said *megas domestikos*, Michael Komnenos,[4] by whom some years later the imperial office of the Romans was enriched to its own good fortune and honour. He left another elsewhere for the security of the territories and cities, but above them all he placed the *megas domestikos* so that they might all obey his commands and orders. The emperor, crossing over to the eastern parts, dwelt there; Demetrios, whom he had removed from the rule of the Thessalonicans, he confined in the fortress of Lentiana and kept watch over him.[5]

The *megas domestikos* lived a short time longer, excelled in his office, fell ill and, after he had taken the tonsure, measured out his life.[6] In his place Theodore Philes[7] was sent to carry out the duties of the office.

When Thessalonike and Berroia[8] became subject to the emperor, the lands beyond and to the west, starting from Platamon, were under the despot Michael,[9] and in addition the area around Pelagonia and Ochrid and Prilep, Vodena and Staridola and Strovos and the surrounding lands were held by Demetrios' father, the uncle of Michael, Theodore Angelos.[10]

§46 *Akrop. recounts here the administrative and military arrangements which the emperor John III left in place in the winter of 1246 for the newly acquired territories in the west. Akrop. gives a lengthy description of Andronikos Palaiologos, his qualities (see §46.2–3) and appointment, and introduces his son Michael to the narrative, jumping ahead to announce his later imperial position. On Akrop.'s presentation of Andronikos, see the Introduction, 60–1.*

[1] 1246: see §47.

[2] Andronikos Palaiologos has indeed been 'often mentioned' (§28, §36, §40) but here Akrop. gives him and his duties a fuller description and encomiastic treatment. Skout. (497.20–1) omits this appraisal of Andronikos: see the Introduction, 68. His military functions as *megas domestikos* in Rhodes and Thessalonike are known from Akrop. (§28, §40) but Pach. (I, 293.5–6) relates that he also had fiscal duties as an *exisotes* in the Skamander region. He exercised this function earlier, in the reign of John III, after the reconquest of the area from the Latins in 1224 and before he was made *megas domestikos*. This can be surmised from the funeral oration for Andronikos by Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid, who states that Andronikos' first appointment was in Asia Minor: ed. Mercati, 77.47.

Andronikos' duties in Thessalonike in 1246 were both military and administrative. Akrop. refers to both functions when he says Andronikos was 'well-acquainted with . . . governing people both in times of war and peace'. Jacob gives more detail, mentioning Andronikos' judicial work, and referring to his role in Thessalonike as that of an *anthypatos*, archaizing language which describes the position of a *praitor:* ed. Mercati, 70.19–22; 77.47–50; Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, 'Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IXe—XIe siècles', 75–8, esp. 76; Herrin, 'Realities of Byzantine provincial government: Hellas and Peloponnesos, 1180–1205', 266–7. Akrop. does not refer to Andronikos as *praitor*, but both Philes and Akrop. (see §46.7, §66, §67), Andronikos' successors in Thessalonike, were called *praitor*. See the Introduction, 27–8.

[3] The use of the word πρᾶος, 'gentle'—and, in the superlative, as it is here—to describe a subject of the emperor is most unusual and alerts readers to the high regard in which Akrop. held Andronikos but also to the imperial qualities which Akrop. ascribed to him. On this, see the Introduction, 60.

[4] Akrop. draws attention to Michael Palaiologos' descent from Alexios I Komnenos, the most illustrious of his ancestors, by referring to him as Michael Komnenos. He was Andronikos' eldest son by marriage to Theodora, granddaughter of Alexios III (see §5.5). Michael was born in Asia Minor in c. 1225: see §50.30. According to his own account of his life, he was brought up and educated at the court of John III and entered upon a military career at the age of 18 (c. 1243): see Michael's typikon for the monastery of St Demetrios (ed. Grégoire, 451) and for the monastery of the Archangel Michael (ed. Dmitrievskii, 790). It is not known what title Michael held in connection with his command in Melnik and Serres. Pach. (41.1–2) says that he received a 'greater title' from the emperor John later when he was cleared of charges of treason in 1253 (see §51). His command is described as combining Melnik and Serres. Cf. §43.16.

[5] Demetrios is not heard of again. For Lentiana, see §7, §16, §22.

[6] The date of Andronikos' death is usually given as 1247 (see, most recently, Cheynet and Vannier, *Études prosopographiques*, 177), presumably on the basis of Akrop.'s imprecise statement that Andronikos 'lived a short time longer' after his appointment in Thessalonike in December 1246. A *terminus post quem* of 1248 is, however, provided by Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid, who wrote a funeral oration for Andronikos in which he relates that, when he fled from his see, Andronikos welcomed him in Thessalonike (ed. Mercati, 73.5–6). Jacob appears to have been in Ochrid in October 1248 when he dedicated a manuscript of saints' lives to the monastery of St Clement, signing the note as archbishop of Ochrid (Dujčev, 'Un nouveau témoignage de Jacques de Bulgarie', 56–8). Thus, although Andronikos was probably still alive in 1248, he

was certainly dead by 1252 when John III set out for the west with 'Tarchaneiotes, his *epi tes trapezes*, executing [the duties] of the *megas domestikos*': see §49.8. See also §50. Jacob further relates that Andronikos died of pleurisy in Thessalonike and was buried there first and then taken to Nicaea where he was reburied in the monastery of the Archistrategos. He had taken the tonsure with the monastic name of Arsenios: ed. Mercati, 78.17–18; 79.5–80.8. Skout. (498.1–2) is negative in his estimation of Andronikos' term in office. See also §78.4.

[7] The Philes family is included by Pach. (I, 93.10–11) in his list of noble families with a 'golden ancestry'. Theodore Komnenos Philes owned the village of Prinobare, near Smyrna, together with his mother-in-law, Eirene Komnene Branaina: MM IV, 213; 225–6; Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, 'La politique agraire des empereurs de Nicée', 59–60. A letter of Theodore II Laskaris, written during his reign, refers to 'the unlawful *praitor*' (Philes): *Epistulae*, 254. On his function as *praitor* in Thessalonike, see the Introduction, 27–8. For Philes later, in the reigns of Theodore II and Michael VIII, see §75, §79.

[8] This is the first indication that Berroia, to the southwest of Thessalonike, also became subject to John III at this time.

[9] Michael Komnenos Doukas probably held Platamon from the time of his uncle Manuel's death: §38. Pelagonia, Prilep, and Ochrid had been in the control of Theodore Komnenos Doukas until his defeat in 1230 at Klokotnitza (see §14, §25) and must have been restored to him sometime thereafter. This is the first mention of Michael as despot and Akrop. gives no explanation. It has been assumed that the emperor John III bestowed the title on Michael and that this occurred either at the time of the marriage alliance of Michael's son and John's granddaughter (§49) in 1248 or 1250 (see Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/1, 115–18) or in 1252 (§49): Greg. I, 48.24–49.4; Ferjančić, *Despoti*, 65–9. A coin was issued showing the emperor John crowning Michael despot: Gerasimov, 'Medni monetina Ioan III Batatses s Epirskia despot Michail II', 319–21. However, this earlier reference to Michael as despot here, already in 1246, cannot be discounted. Akrop. mentions Michael twice before this passage, in neither case with any title (§14, §39). His use of the title here would not seem to be pure chance. Other evidence which supports an early bestowal of the title is provided by Michael's charter to Makrinitissa of May 1246: MM IV, 345–9. See the Introduction, 40, 97.

[10] For Theodore at Vodena (modern Edessa), see below at §49. The abundance of water on the site of the town gave rise to both its ancient/modern name, Edessa, and the Slavic toponymic, Vodena. See Ephraim, 9046; Vasmer, *Die Slaven*, 197. For Ostrovos or Strovos, 18 km west of Vodena, on Lake Ostrovos, see below, §49; *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 256–7; Vasmer, *Die Slaven*, 95, 200; Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 309–10. The location of Staridola is not

known but it has been tentatively identified with Sarigiol, to the south of Ptolemais and north of Kozani. See Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 335–6 n. 5.

47. The emperor spent the winter in the region of Nymphaion[1] but when spring arrived, he left from there, as was his custom. Since he had a truce with everyone,[2] he determined to attack the towns neighbouring on the city of Constantine and held by the Latins; I mean Tzouroulos[3] and Bizye. For he observed too that Latin affairs were in a very weakened state. So crossing the Hellespont, he came first to Tzouroulos. Inside the town was the sister of the emperor's wife, Eudokia, whom Anselm of Cahieu had married at the wish of her sister, the empress Eirene, and her brother-in-law, the emperor.[4] However, Anselm of Cahieu did not hold out in the town, for when he learned of the emperor's approach he withdrew and left his wife Eudokia in the town, entrusting to her an adequate garrison. For he thought that the emperor would not wish to besiege the town because of his sister-in-law. But the emperor, for the most part disregarding such considerations, stationed himself near the town, set up siege towers and machines for knocking down the defences, and took it in a very few days. He dispatched his sister-in-law to Constantinople, giving her a single horse for her mount, while he released all those who were guarding the town; they were infantry.[5] He dispatched an army and also conquered the town of Bizye quickly, and added this also to his realm.[6]

§47 *The date of events in this section, the conquests of Tzouroulos and Bizye, is known from two manuscript notes which describe the emperor John III's expeditions to Thrace in the summer of 1247. See Polemis, 'A manuscript note of the year 1247', 269–76; Evangelatou-Notara, 'Πολεμικές ἐπιχειρήσεις στὴ Θράκη το θέρος τοῦ 1247', 189–97. It is from these dated manuscript notes that the chronology of previous events, related in §43–6, can be established. See above at §43. Furthermore, these notes state that the emperor John's army was accompanied by additional forces, those of the Bulgarian ruler Michael (Polemis, 'A manuscript note of the year 1247', 270) and by Cumans (Evangelatou-Notara, 'Πολεμικές ἐπιχειρήσεις', 189). Skout. (498.27–499.3=*Additamenta*, no. 28, pp 283–4) says that at Bizye the emperor was nearly killed by an arrow, propelled by a mangonel from within the fortress, as he was going to meet with the inhabitants. Akrop. appears not to have been present on this expedition.*

[1] For the emperor's wintering at Nymphaion, see §41; the Introduction, 87–8. This is the winter of 1246–7.

[2] With the Turks: §41 (1243), the Bulgarians: §44 (1246), and the Komneno-Doukai: §46 (1246).

[3] Tzouroulos had been conquered by the emperor John III between 1235 (§33.15) and 1237 (§36.4). It was reconquered by the Latins in 1240 (§37.9).

[4] Eudokia, daughter of Theodore I and sister of the empress Eirene, was married to Anselm of Cahieu early in the reign of John III, possibly in 1225: see §24.

[5] Akrop. differs from the anonymous author of a manuscript note on this point. According to the latter, the emperor made the Latins prisoners and sent them to Asia Minor. See Polemis, 'A manuscript note of the year 1247', 271.

[6] The anonymous author of the manuscript note of 1247 adds that the towns of Medea and Derkos on the shores of the Black Sea were also added to the emperor's possessions, without bloodshed. See Polemis, 'A manuscript note of the year 1247', 270–1.

48. Around this time[1] also, the town of the island of Rhodes was captured by the Genoese by stealth at night.[2] For its ruler, John Gabalas, brother of the caesar Leo Gabalas who was master of the island after his brother's death,[3] was away with the emperor in the area of Nikomedeia,[4] attacking the Latins in Constantinople. At once, therefore, the *epi tou kerasmatos* John Kantakouzenos was dispatched by imperial order. He was at that time honoured with the office of *doux* of the Thrakesion.[5] He went into the interior of the island with a moderate number of men capable of using arms, and managed to occupy the fortress on it, called Phileremos.[6] So, then, he fought against the Genoese with as much force as he had.

When an adequate army was sent to him, he encamped near the town and besieged the Genoese within, but he did not inflict damage on them for they had available a lasting supply of food; they had found the homes of the Rhodians full of provisions and therefore were not lacking in any of the necessities. They also slept with their women, except those they expelled, being too old or not fair in looks. And the town of Rhodes would have come under Roman control quickly by reason of Kantakouzenos' constant siege and skilful fighting with heavy arms, if the following had not happened. For, since the prince of Achaia, Villehardouin, was sailing to Syria, bringing auxiliary forces to those Franks who had gone to Syria, and had on his triremes heavily armed cavalry, he ran ashore on the island of Rhodes and made an agreement with the Genoese on it and left behind with them approximately a hundred noble and worthy cavalrymen.[7] This forced the Romans to withdraw from the siege of the town and to be content with living in Phileremos. Then the cavalry that had been left behind by the prince left the Genoese foot-soldiers alone at the town,[8] sallied forth, and plundered the entire countryside. They thus procured the necessaries for themselves, but as a

result a shortage of the necessities was created for the Romans, as the Genoese had dromons[9] and other ships fit for piracy.[10]

The emperor John arrived at Nymphaion and prepared a battle-worthy fleet in Smyrna,[11] arranging for horse-carrying triremes to transport up to 300 horses, and appointing as their commander Theodore Kontostephanos, who held the dignity of *protosebastos*;[12] and when he had conveyed to him in writing how he should arrange and order the battle, as well as where and when, he dispatched him, wishing him and those with him success. So then the *protosebastos* Theodore put out to sea with the triremes and, arriving at the island of Rhodes, did everything as the emperor had commanded, and routed the Latins. When the emperor's men encountered the Latins plundering outside the town, they slaughtered them all to a man, for the *epi tou kerasmatos* John Kantakouzenos commanded that not one of them be spared.

And so, in this way, the Frankish cavalry was destroyed by imperial prudence, while the Genoese infantry left behind in the town of Rhodes held it, fighting with those who were outside the town. But since they did not have the force to hold out for a long time, they came to terms. They surrendered the town to the Romans, while they themselves went to the emperor and, in accordance with the treaties that had been made with them, enjoyed imperial clemency. And so once again the island of Rhodes came under the Romans.[13] This is how events turned out.

§48 *This account of the expedition against the Genoese on Rhodes, together with Akrop.'s earlier mention of John III's 1233 expedition against Leo Gabalas (§27–8), are Akrop.'s only mentions of military intervention on the islands by the emperors at Nicaea. See the Introduction, 100–1. The only datable event in this narrative is William of Villehardouin's journey to the east and arrival on Rhodes during the siege: May 1249 (see §48.7). The whole episode has therefore been dated to 1249. However, as Hendy (*Catalogue *IV/1, 116–18) argues, Villehardouin's arrival on Rhodes occurred some time into the siege; the Genoese attack is likely to have occurred in 1248, and the siege to have continued for a long time, allowing for the building of ships at Smyrna. He therefore dates the episode to 1248–50. A letter of Frederick II to John III, congratulating the emperor on his victory, is dated 1250: MM III, 72=N. Festa, 'Le lettere greche di Federigo II',* Archivo storico Italiano *13 (1894), 22; Martin, 'Frédéric II, l'empire de Nicée et le "césaropapisme" ', 476–9, 481. Another source for the attack on Rhodes and the emperor's victory is an oration of 1252/3 by Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid: ed. Mercati, 88.23–89.11.*

[1] The last-mentioned event, the conquest of Tzouroulos and Bizye, dates to 1247. See Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/1, 116–18, for the date of 1248 for the Genoese attack.

[2] Jacob of Ochrid uses the same expression to describe the Genoese conquest, 'by stealth', ἐκ κλοπῆς: ed. Mercati, 88.24.

[3] The caesar Leo Gabalas was in control of the island in 1233 when the emperor John invaded it. See §27–8. Although the attempt to bring Leo within the emperor's control does not appear to have been an immediate success, by 1235/6 Leo was fighting with the emperor against the Latins (see §27.3). Leo's date of death is unknown. The copper coins of his brother John refer to him as 'lord' (αὐθέντης) of Rhodes: Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 648–50.

[4] Nikomedeia had been in Nicaean control since 1225: §24.1, §37.14. An attack on the Latins in Constantinople is related by an anonymous manuscript note of 1247 which claims that the emperor John, together with Cumans, struck Constantinople but were defeated in July 1247. See Evangelatou-Notara, '*Πολεμικὲς ἐπιχειρήσεις*', 189. It seems that Akrop. refers here to another attack on Constantinople, dating to 1248. For the date, see §48. For the emperor John's attempts against Constantinople and Akrop.'s reporting of them, see §41 and the Introduction, 100.

[5] John Komnenos Kantakouzenos is attested as *doux* of the Thrakesion theme at least from 1244 until the time of this expedition: MM IV, 139–40, 216; VI, 183; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 144–5; also, Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 77 n. 107. His name appears on documents and seals with the titles of *doux* and *pinkernes*; the latter is the equivalent of Akrop.'s archaizing *epi tou kerasmatos*: see Skout. 499.11 for this; Wilson and Darrouzès, 'Restes du cartulaire de Hiéra-Xérochoraphion', 20–1; Laurent, *Les bulles métriques*, no. 621, p. 282. Kantakouzenos had died by 1257: MM IV, 70. See Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos*, no. 13, pp 14–16. See §86.2 for his wife Eirene, sister of Michael VIII Palaiologos.

[6] Phileremos is 5 km to the southwest of the town of Rhodes. Skout. adds (499.16=*Additamenta*, no. 29, p. 284) that the fortress of Lindos was taken as well. Lindos is c. 40 km south of the town of Rhodes.

[7] William II Villehardouin, son of Geoffrey I, was prince of Achaia, the Frankish territory in the Peloponnese, from 1246–78. He was on his way to Cyprus in May of 1249 to meet Louis IX's fleet bound for Egypt (not Syria, as Akrop. says) when he stopped at Rhodes. He had with him 400 knights. See Joinville, §146–8, pp 80–2; Sanudo, 102. For the date see Sir George Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, 189–90. Jacob of Ochrid characterizes his arrival on the island, as if 'by signal'. The men were 'from Italy, Euboia and Hellas itself': ed. Mercati, 88.31–89.3. For William II, see also below §76, §79, §81, §83. For 'Achaia', see *ODB* I, 11–12.

[8] Heis.'s text at p. 87.9 has been emended to read παρὰ τῷ ἄστει, as proposed by Bases (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii).

[9] Akrop. usually refers to ships in general as 'triremes' (see, e.g. §22, §23, §48: 'horse-carrying triremes') but he is occasionally more specific and more contemporary in his language. Here, and at §85, he mentions dromons, oared warships. See Pryor, 'Types of ships and their performance capabilities', 33–58. See the Introduction, 51 and n. 315.

[10] Blem. had been warned of piracy in the waters around Rhodes in the 1230s when he stopped there on his way to Jerusalem: *Autobiographia* II, §24.

[11] Jacob of Ochrid also refers to the emperor's preparation of the fleet: ed. Mercati, 89.9. For Smyrna, whose importance as a dockyard is attested in this passage, see §52 and Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*, 437, 321 n. 3; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', *passim*. For the fleet of the empire, see the Introduction, 100–1.

[12] For Theodore Kontostephanos, see above §40.15.

[13] In late 1249 or 1250: see §48.7 and above at §28.

49. The emperor John made a treaty with the despot Michael and joined with him in an alliance of marriage. He brought as a bridegroom for Maria,[1] the daughter of his son, the emperor Theodore, Michael's son Nikephoros.[2] Theodora,[3] the wife of Michael, taking Nikephoros with her, crossed over to the east and met with the emperor, who was staying in the region of Pegai,[4] and the betrothal of the children took place. Taking her son again, Theodora departed for home, to her husband, having been treated kindly, as was fitting, by the emperor. But the proverb was shown to be true for Michael also: 'the crooked stick can never be straight and the Ethiopian cannot become white'.[5] For he rose up in revolt against the emperor,[6] using his uncle Theodore Angelos as an advisor with regard to the pretext. The emperor John became aware of this and learned about their conspiracy; he considered no others to be enemies of the empire of the Romans, after the conquest of the city of Constantine, if not they. Since he maintained a truce on the part of the Muslims, and Bulgarian affairs also were at rest, he prepared in a manner worthy of battle and, so to speak, imperially,[7] and drew up all the forces as was appropriate, crossed the Hellespont, with many other generals along with Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes, his *epi tes trapezes*, executing the duties of the *megas domestikos*.[8] He rested his hopes on Tarchaneiotes' character, considering him to be well-disposed and, in strategies, as experience bore witness, most skilful.

When he arrived at Thessalonike, he led his troops away from there and encamped at Vodena. Angelos had just fled from that place[9] and gone to his nephew, the despot Michael. So then the emperor set up the siege of Vodena, and it was not long before he won over the town of Vodena. Marching away from there, he pitched tent in a certain place near the lake of Ostrovos.[10] He dispatched generals[11] against the territories of the despot Michael—Alexios

Strategopoulos,[12] Michael Palaiologos,[13] son of the *megas domestikos*, John Makrenos,[14] Goudeles Tyrannos,[15] and others—so that they might plunder the surrounding area; should they encounter an army of Michael II somewhere, they might proceed to fight against it and, should they have the opportunity, they might also besiege a town. And that is what they did, and they advanced in front of the imperial tent. But the emperor waited in the area of Ostrovos and was downcast because he had not managed to accomplish anything worthwhile. The army also was disgruntled, for the weather was wintry, and they were lacking the necessities. But the emperor took care of this. From Berroia,[16] on mules and camels, he conveyed the necessities into the camp.

When the emperor had made arrangements in this way, quite unexpectedly there passed over to the emperor a fugitive, Glabas,[17] from Kastoria, and immediately thereafter, Theodore Petraliphas,[18] the son-in-law of Demetrios Komnenos Tornikes[19] who had managed public affairs together with the emperor John, since Tornikes was greatly loved and honoured by the emperor; for he called him 'brother' in his documents. Tornikes had departed from men some time before.[20] There was therefore no administrator of public affairs who was known by a dignity or a title of office;[21] the emperor used in his service chance people, untitled secretaries,[22] Joseph Mesopotamites,[23] and Nikephoros Alyates[24] who assisted him, but for the more high-level documents which deserved special care, John Makrotos[25] and me.[26]

When the said Petraliphas who was the brother of Michael's wife[27] came over to the emperor, it filled the emperor himself and the army with good cheer. For Kastoria[28] and all the territory around it immediately went over to the emperor, and the Deavoleis, both the small and the large,[29] became his. Also Goulamos from Albanon, whose wife was the empress Eirene's niece, a daughter of her first cousin,[30] was in the vicinity of Kastoria with the army from Albanon when, enticed by propitiatory words and letters with promises from the emperor, he went over to the emperor. The emperor received all these men in a friendly manner and honoured them fittingly.

When the despot Michael learned this and saw that the affairs which concerned him were in narrow straits and were going the emperor's way, he sent an embassy to the emperor through the metropolitan of Naupaktos, Xeros,[31] and through Maliasenos, Michael's brother-in-law by marriage to his sister,[32] and through Lampetes;[33] they conferred with the emperor and drew up an agreement. Michael for his part released to the emperor the town of Prilep, and Veles,[34] and the fortress of Kroai[35] in Albanon, and from the emperor's side written oaths were advanced and ambassadors were sent to him: Phokas of Philadelphia[36] and Isaac Doukas, the *primmikerios* of the court whom they also called Mourtzouphlos,[37] and Michael Hyaleas,[38] and me.[39] We went, then, to

Michael, and found him in Larissa and concluded the treaty. We returned again to the emperor encamped at Vodena, taking with us Michael's son, Nikephoros, to whom the emperor had given the honour of despot[40] because of his granddaughter, and also Michael's uncle, Theodore Angelos, prisoner.[41] Things came to pass in this way and affairs came to this conclusion.

The emperor, then, spent the winter at Vodena, but in the spring, when he had celebrated the day of Resurrection,[42] he left the encamped army in that area, appointing to its command the *protovestiarios* Alexios Raoul, the emperor's son-in-law through his brother's child,[43] and Michael Komnenos Palaiologos, while he went with an army of moderate size to inspect the territories which had recently become his. He went to Ochrid,[44] visited Deavolis and from there went to Kastoria. In the autumn season, after he had prepared the army, he took the road to the east.

§49 *Akrop. gives an account of the treaty and marriage alliance made between Michael II and John III and of the subsequent campaign of John III against Michael in the winter of 1252–3. The date of the campaign can be ascertained by working back from the date of John III's death, November 1254, in Anatolia upon his return from the campaign (§52). The emperor spent the winter of 1252–3 in Vodena (§49). In the spring of 1253 he was at Philippi (§50) and he returned to Asia Minor at the end of the winter, 1253–4 (§52). However, the date of the treaty between Michael and John is more problematic. It has been dated to 1249 (Dölger-Wirth,* Regesten, *no. 1799, p. 42) on the basis of its position in Akrop.'s narrative* after *the victory at Rhodes, likewise thought to date to 1249 (Dölger-Wirth,* Regesten, *no. 1800, p. 43). See now, however, the suggested date of 1248–50 for the Rhodes expedition: §48. Hendy proposes a date of 1248 for the treaty, at the start of the Rhodes campaign, when the emperor was at Nikomedeia and could have met Nikephoros and Theodora at Pegai (*Catalogue *IV/1, 115–18). 1248 is also in keeping with Hendy's dating of a type of coin showing John III crowning Michael II despot (Hendy,* Catalogue *IV/2, 625–6). Although the treaty could have been the occasion for the bestowal of the title on Michael (*in absentia*), Akrop. first calls Michael despot as early as 1246, after John III's conquest of Thessalonike (see at §46.9). It is therefore possible that the coin type was issued to commemorate the bestowal of the title any time from 1246. See the Introduction, 97, on this. The date of the agreement between Michael II and John III could be as late as 1250, after the victory in Rhodes, or as early as 1248. For the connection between Michael II's revolt here and the accusations made against Michael Palaiologos, see §50.15 and the Introduction, 72–3.*

[1] Maria was one of five children born to Theodore II and his Bulgarian wife Helen: see §74. According to Greg. (I, 48.2–6) the marriage was to take place

the year after the betrothal, but in the event it did not occur until 1256: see §64.

[2] On Nikephoros, eldest son of Michael Komnenos Doukas and Theodora, see Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 49, pp 94–5. Orlandos (‘*Ὁ τάφος τῆς Ἁγ. Θεοδώρας*’, *Ἀρχεῖον τῶν Βυζαντινῶν Μνημείων τῆς Ἑλλάδος*, 105–10) has identified him as the figure depicted with his mother Theodora on a marble tomb in the church of St Theodora in Arta. See also, Patlagean, ‘Une sainte souveraine grecque’, 455. However, a different identification of the figures (Anna Kantakouzene Palaiologina and her son Thomas) has since been convincingly proposed: B. Cvetković, ‘The investiture relief in Arta, Epiros’, *ZRVI* 33 (1994), 103–13.

[3] Theodora, the wife of Michael II, was the daughter of John Petraliphas, according to the *Life* of St Theodora: PG 127.904A; ed. Moustoxydes, 42. He is probably not the John Petraliphas, *megas chartoularios*, mentioned by Akrop. On this see §24; Patlagean, ‘Une sainte souveraine grecque’, 453–60.

[4] On the significance of the emperor's stay at Pegai, see the Introduction, 100.

[5] *CPG* I, p. 284, no. 92; II, p. 549, no. 25; p. 258, no. 68; cf. Jeremiah 13.23. See, also, Massing, ‘From Greek proverb to soap advert: washing the Ethiopian’, 180–200.

[6] Akrop. refers to Michael's ‘revolt’ and ‘conspiracy’ (Heis. 89.7). He uses *ἀποστασία* (‘revolt’) otherwise only for the caesar Gabalas' actions in Rhodes (§27.8, §26.3). Michael is called ‘the renegade’ from this point on in the *History*. See the Introduction, 40. Greg. (I, 48) indicates that the revolt had to do with the lands of the emperor in the west. Akrop. does not make clear the nature or the extent of the revolt. Of the towns ceded by Michael at the end of the campaign described here, only Veles was previously in the emperor's possession (1246: §44). It appears, however, that the case against Michael Komnenos which the emperor heard at Philippi, after this campaign, was related to the same conspiracy: see §50.15; Introduction, 72–3.

[7] The use of the word ‘imperially’ to describe the emperor John's actions is striking since Akrop. elsewhere applies this word to the empress Eirene and implies criticism of the emperor John's manner (see §23.13; §52; Introduction, 57). Here he therefore seems to be making the point that the emperor did not hold back but prepared a large and impressive army.

[8] When he first speaks of Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes, son-in-law of Andronikos Palaiologos, at Tzouroulos in 1237 (§36), Akrop. says of him that he was later to become *megas domestikos*. Here it appears that he has not yet been made *megas domestikos* but that Andronikos Palaiologos, the holder of the title, is already deceased and that Tarchaneiotes is carrying out the duties without the title. For the date of Andronikos' death, anytime after 1248 and

by 1252, see §46.6 and below §49.8, §50.8. The next holder of the title after Tarchaneiotes was George Mouzalon. See §60.

[9] Vodena (modern Edessa) is mentioned above at §46 as one of the places under the control of Theodore Komnenos Doukas in 1246.

[10] The mediaeval town of Ostrovos or Strovos, to the west of Vodena, was situated on a lake. Pach. (I, 151.12) calls it an 'island on a lake'. See above, §46.

[11] With the exception of Michael Palaiologos, these men have not been mentioned before. Strategopoulos and Makrenos are prominent in the reign of Michael Palaiologos. See §49.12, 14.

[12] Strategopoulos becomes more prominent in Akrop.'s narrative from the reign of Theodore II (see below, §57) but achieves fame under Michael VIII (see §81, §85). He suffered under Theodore II (§75), like other members of the 'golden chain' of noble families enumerated by Pach. (I, 93.1–15). For members of the family in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 297 n. 73, 128 n. 2: a *doux* of Thessalonike (1193–4). A John Strategopoulos, *megas logothetes*, is mentioned in a document of 1216: MM IV, 295; Angold, *Exile*, 167. See below at §57, §75, §82, §84, §85, §89, where Strategopoulos is always mentioned in the company of Constantine Tornikes.

[13] Michael was presumably at his command in Melnik and Serres (see §46) where he was left by the emperor John III in 1246.

[14] John Makrenos has been identified with the man by the same name mentioned by Pach. (I, 273.9–10; 275–7) as *parakoimomenos* to Michael VIII, sent to the Peloponnese in 1262 in command of troops. See Pach. I, 273 n. 4 and Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 146. A Makrenos was involved in the 1224–5 conspiracy against the emperor John III (§23). A George Makrenos was *doux* of the Thrakesion theme in 1256: MM IV, 211, 224, 247.

[15] Goudeles Tyrannos is a name composed of two patronymics. There is no consensus of opinion as to the order in which the names are written (cf. Heis., 'Index', 365), or whether the two names together function as a double-barrelled name or whether the one is a first name, the other a surname. The names Goudeles and Tyrannos are found separately as surnames: for 'Goudeles', see Skyl. 396.26; for later bearers of the names, see Tzannetatos, *Τὸ πρακτικὸν τῆς Λατινικῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Κεφαλληνίας*, 50.301; 82.808–9; 79.755–6; 79.769; MM IV, 8 (Goudeles), 175 (Tyrannina): in Mantaia and Nymphaion. In combination: see Lampros, '*Ὁ Βυζαντινός οἶκος Γουδέλη*', 211–21. A Goudeles Tyrannos, *doulos* of the emperor, left all his property to the monastery of Lembos in 1294: MM IV, 285–7. An identification of this man with Akrop.'s general is possible as the act of benefaction could be that of an old man at the end of his life. Cf. Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 170.

[16] Berroia had become the emperor's along with Thessalonike in 1246: §46.

[17] Nothing is known about 'Glabas from Kastoria'. He may be the father of Michael Glabas (Tarchaneiotes), *kouropalates* and later *megas papias*, mentioned by Pach. (II, 451.15–16; 450 n. 4) as head of an expedition sent during Michael VIII's reign to take Mesembria on the Black Sea coast (1262). For this suggestion see Belting, Mango and Mouriki, *The mosaics and frescoes of St Mary Pammakaristos*, 11–12 and n. 32; Polemis, *Doukai*, p. 120 and no. 89, pp 120–1.

[18] Akrop. identifies this Theodore Petraliphas, married to a daughter of Demetrios Komnenos Tornikes, as a brother of Michael II's wife, Theodora (§49.27). He is therefore also the son of the *sebastokrator* John Petraliphas: *Life* of St Theodora, PG 127.904A; ed. Moustoxydes, 42. Theodore Petraliphas had another sister, Maria, married to a Sphrantzes (see §68). For his defection to the emperor John III, see below §49.27. On the family see §24.12.

[19] This passage (Heis., pp 90.20–91.5), which begins with the introduction of Demetrios Komnenos Tornikes as father-in-law of Petraliphas and ends with Akrop.'s insertion of himself into the narrative, constitutes a long digression from the narrative of events in Ostrovos. Demetrios Komnenos Tornikes, mentioned above (§40) for the first time, the grandson of Demetrios Tornikes, *epi tou kanikleiou* in the twelfth century, was an influential man under Theodore I and John III (see M. Chon.'s letter: Lampros, II, 356–7; Kolovou, 286–7). His influence and power are reflected in the emperor John's use of the kin term 'brother' (*αὐτάδελφος*) when referring to Demetrios in documents: MM IV, 41, 147, 193, 199. It is not possible to say whether the emperor and Tornikes had entered into a relationship of ritual brotherhood (*adelphopoiia*) or whether only the language of brotherhood was used to mark their closeness. See Rapp, 'Ritual brotherhood in Byzantium', 285–316. But Pach. (I, 91.24–93.1) states that Tornikes' sons acquired standing and prestige from the fact that their father had been called 'brother' by the emperor John.

Tornikes held no known title of office under Theodore I or John III (see §49.21). Akrop. describes his functions by saying that he 'managed public affairs' or was 'a mediator (*μεσιτεύων*) in affairs' (see §40), phrases which are in keeping with the linguistic register of Akrop.'s narrative. He avoids the more common, popular expression, *mesazon*, which is ascribed to Tornikes in a lemma to M. Chon.'s letter dating to Theodore I's reign: ed. Lampros, II, 356–7; Kolovou, *Epistulae*, 285) and in copyists' descriptions of Tornikes' signature on documents: MM IV, 139, 145, 220, 241, 249: [*Εἶχε*] *τὸ διὰ τοῦ Τορνίκη Δημητρίου, ὡς ἔθος τοῖς μεσάζουσιν*. Like others described as 'mediators' and 'administrators of public affairs', Tornikes had a vast but undefined jurisdiction, deriving his power from the emperor's confidence in him. He mediated between the emperor and various services. The '*διά*' ('through') on documents followed by his name can perhaps be seen as

evidence that the document was released to various sekreta for registration, having passed 'through' his hands: e.g. Vranouse, *Βυζαντινὰ Ἔγγραφα* I, 122.42 (1221). See Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I', 104–5; cf. Oikonomides, 'La chancellerie impériale', 178–9 and n. 65. For another view, see Karayannopulos, 'Zu den "*ΔIA*-Vermerken" der byzantinischen Kaiserurkunden', 203–32. However, there is some confusion among modern historians as to whether his duties as 'mediator' were different from those as 'administrator of public affairs'. See Angold, *Exile*, 149, 155–61; Loenertz, 'Le chancelier impérial', 275–300. In Attaleiates' (Bonn, 66.15–16; Peréz Martín, 51.3–4) description of Leichoudes as 'mediating (*μεσάζων*) in the palace the administration of all [matters]', there appears to be no distinction. Akrop. himself shows that when Tornikes died his work was done by a number of people, all in the chancery (see §49.21–5). See Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative', 131–2 and n. 35.

Demetrios married a first cousin of Andronikos Palaiologos (see §50) by whom he had four children: a daughter who married Theodore Petraliphas (§49.18), a son Constantine, *megas primmekerios* under John III (§57.7; §75), a son John, *sebastokrator* under Michael VIII (§84), and Andronikos. See Schmalzbauer, 'Die Tornikioi in der Palaiologenzeit', 117–19, 121–2, 122–3. The Tornikes family is a good example of divided political loyalties after 1204: Demetrios' father Constantine stayed in Constantinople in the service of the Latins; Constantine's brother Euthymios went to Euboia and then joined Apokaukos, metropolitan of Naupaktos; Demetrios himself served the emperors of Nicaea while his daughter married Petraliphas who, until 1252, was with the Komneno-Doukai of Epiros. See the Introduction, 97. On the family see Adontz, 'Les Taronites à Byzance', 21–42; Darrouzès, 'Notes sur Euthyme Tornikès, Euthyme Malakès, et Georges Tornikès', 149, 152–5, 163–7; Darrouzès, 'Les discours d'Euthyme Tornikès (1200–1205)', 108.8–10, and n. 22.

[20] Tornikes' death occurred after 1248 and before 1252. Akrop. says that Tornikes died while Andronikos Palaiologos was 'still alive and in Thessalonike' (§50.8), i.e. after 1248, but 'some time before', i.e. before the time of the events of this passage (1252). For the date of Andronikos Palaiologos' death, see §46.6.

[21] I understand Akrop. to mean that after Tornikes' death there was no administrator of public affairs who held a dignity or title. Rather, many different people were used by the emperor to fulfil the functions which Tornikes had carried out and not one of them was known as an 'administrator of public affairs', a '*mesazon*'. This sentence does not imply that the administrator of public affairs was a title of office or that he who administered public affairs had a special title. On the contrary, he could hold any dignity or title

whatsoever: e.g. John Doukas who held the title of caesar while he 'administered public affairs': Oikonomides, 'Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067)', 107.78–108.1, 118, 122. See, also, the case of Theodore Mouzalon who is designated *protovestiarios* and *megas logothetes* and *mesazon* on a document: MM IV, 272–3, but who acted as 'mediator in public affairs' also when he was *logothetes tou genikou* (Pach. I, 625.18–20).

[22] The word ἀνωνύμοι used to describe the clerks or secretaries means 'nameless', 'undistinguished'. See below at §81.22 for this meaning. However, in view of the fact that Akrop. makes a point of saying that Tornikes' work was done by people who did not hold titles, the word can be translated as 'untitled'. Akrop. makes a distinction between the 'untitled secretaries', Mesopotamites and Alyates, and Makrotos and himself who may have held titles at this time. See the Introduction, 21–3, for a discussion of Akrop. as *logothetes tou genikou.*

[23] Joseph Mesopotamites was a correspondent of Theodore II before the latter's accession to the throne: see *Epistulae*, 150–8. A Mesopotamites is mentioned in a document of 1259 as deceased. He had judged a case concerning the monastery of Lembos and private individuals: MM IV, 208; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1879, pp 70–1. For Constantine Mesopotamites, *epi tou kanikleiou* and later metropolitan of Thessalonike in the reigns of Isaac II and Alexios III, see §21.4.

[24] Like Mesopotamites, Nikephoros Alyates came from a family that had held positions in the chancery before 1204: Chon. 479.41, apparatus: Andronikos Alyates, *epi tou kanikleiou.* Nikephoros may be the same Alyates who drafted the preface to a praktikon which survives in a manuscript of the second half of the thirteenth century: Ševčenko, 'On the preface to a praktikon by Alyates', 65–72, esp. 68, 69. Nikephoros was *epi tou kanikleiou* in the reign of Theodore II. See §75, §79.

[25] John Makrotos is to be identified with 'the imperial secretary Makrotos', recipient of a letter from Nikephoros Blemmydes, written while Blem. was on Mt Athos in 1238–9 (Westerink, 'Some unpublished letters of Blemmydes', 54, 55; also Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 79–80 and n. 102), and a correspondent of George Babouskomites, teacher of the future patriarch Bekkos (Laurent, 'La correspondance inédite de Georges Babouscomitès', nos 3 and 4, pp 92–3). See also §50 for John Makrotos as one of the judges at Michael Palaiologos' trial in 1253, together with Akrop.

[26] Akrop. closes a digression which began with the mention of Petraliphas' father-in-law, Demetrios Tornikes (Heis., pp 90.20–91.5), and ends with Akrop. himself. It is important for what it reveals of Tornikes' extensive responsibilities and Akrop.'s function at this time. On this, see the Introduction, 21–2.

[27] Theodore Petraliphas, the brother of Theodora, wife of Michael II (see §49.18), went over to the emperor John III's side, bringing with him Kastoria and Deavolis. As these places were not among those Michael II ceded to the emperor at this time (see §49.34, 35), it can be inferred that Petraliphas negotiated directly with the emperor. Later, probably in 1257, Theodore defected once again to Michael II (§80.3).

[28] For the fortifications at Kastoria, see Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, 6.1.1; P. Tsolakes, *Πολεοδομικὲς καὶ ἀρχιτεκτονικὲς ἔρευνες στὴν Καστοριά* (Thessalonike, 1996).

[29] Kant. (I, 279.23) likewise uses the plural when referring to Deavolis (Devol), located on the river of the same name to the south of Lake Ochrid, on the north side of Mt Tomor. The plural form can perhaps be ascribed to the two fortresses of Deavolis. See Nicol, *Despotate*, 224; Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 254.3: 'the theme of Deavolis'.

[30] The wife of Goulamos was the niece of the empress Eirene, the daughter of Eirene's first cousin. (For Akrop.'s use of 'niece', *αὐτανεψιά* (Heis. 91.13–14), see Failler, 'Pachymeriana quaedam', 189–90.) His wife was therefore a granddaughter of Eudokia, Alexios III's daughter, from her marriage with the 'kral of Serbia', Stephen Nemanja (see §5.7), since Eudokia's daughter was Eirene's first cousin (see Genealogical Table 2). The daughter of Eudokia and Stephen was married twice, first to Demetrios of Albanon and, upon his death, to the *sebastos* Gregory Kamonas: Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, no. 1, p. 18. Goulamos' wife was a daughter from the marriage to Kamonas: Nicol, *Despotate*, 156 n. 13. Failler, *Georges Pachymérès* IV, 596 n. 71, identifies Goulamos with 'a certain Goulielmos', a foreigner (*xenos*) whom the emperor John III honoured with 'Roman dignities' (Pach. IV, 597.5–6). However, 'Goulielmos' and not 'Goulamos' is the Greek version of 'William', for both Pach. and Akrop. (Heis. 164.5). Albanon, the mountainous area between Lake Ochrid and Dyrrachion, had been under Theodore Komnenos' control (§14) and then Asan's in 1230 (§25). It must have reverted to the control of the Komneno-Doukai after Asan's death.

[31] Xeros' first name, John, is known from Skout. (502.8=*Additamenta*, no. 30, p. 284). He had had previous contact with Nicaea. In 1250 he had travelled to Anatolia to obtain a synodal decision on his transfer from the metropolitan see of Larissa where he was a bishop, to that of Naupaktos, where he became metropolitan: Rh.-P. V, 116–18; Laurent, *Regestes*, nos 1316, 1317, pp 123–5.

[32] Constantine Maliasenos, also called Doukas Bryennios Komnenos, was married to Maria Komnene Angelina, daughter of Michael I Komnenos Doukas, niece of Theodore Komnenos Doukas, and sister of Michael II; hence Maliasenos was Michael II's brother-in-law. See MM IV, 345, 382;

Polemis, *Doukai*, 142–3. He was the founder of the monastery of Makrinitissa on Mt Pelion, c. 1215, and enjoyed considerable privileges and benefits under Michael II (MM IV, 375; 345–9). On the cartulary which contains the documents pertaining to the monastery, see Magdalino, 'Notes on the last years of John Palaiologos, brother of Michael VIII', 144–8. Maliasenos had appealed to the patriarchs Germanos (1223–40) and Manuel II (1243–4) for help against a local bishop and therefore, like John Xeros, had had contact with Nicaea before the embassy of 1252. He is referred to as deceased in 1256: see MM IV, 354. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 153–4, suggests that Maliasenos is the anonymous toparch in Thessaly in 1204 mentioned by Chon. (638.49–51), but see Magdalino, 'Between Romaniae: Thessaly and Epirus in the later Middle Ages', 101.

[33] The Lampetes mentioned here could be Constantine Lampetes who referred a case to the synod at Ochrid while Theodore Komnenos Doukas was emperor and who was still alive while his brother Manuel was despot (before 1230 to 1237): Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 139–44, 381–2 (text); 109–10, 234 (commentary).

[34] Michael II had held Prilep at least from 1246 (see §44, §46). Velesos (Veles) was last mentioned by Akrop. as belonging to the emperor John in 1246 (§44). Therefore, Michael must have seized it in the interim: see above, §49.6.

[35] Kroai, between the Ishmi and Mati rivers in Albanon, was the main fortress of the region in this period. The emperor John granted privileges to the inhabitants of Kroai at this time which are known from a chrysobull of Andronikos II, inserted in a document of Alfonso V of Aragon (1457): Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1810, p. 46; Thallóczy and Jireček, 'Zwei Urkunden aus Nordalbanien', 97. The privileges provided for the freedom of the inhabitants and their control over all their possessions, both within and without the town.

[36] Phokas of Philadelphia is the metropolitan of Philadelphia, the emperor John III's advisor after the death of Demetrios Tornikes, as Akrop. reveals later (§50). See above, §49.19 on Demetrios Tornikes. Several of Theodore II's letters to him have survived, including one of c. 1254, concerning the appointment of an abbot to the imperial monastery of Kouzenas: *Epistulae*, 162–5; Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no.1823a, p. 50. In the same letter Theodore II mentions hymns he sent to Phokas for his opinion: *Epistulae*, 164.15–20; Constantinides, *Higher education*, 23.

[37] Isaac Doukas, also called Mourtzouphlos, is mentioned in the reign of Theodore II as the commander of an army (§69). For the nickname Mourtzouphlos, see §3.6. For the title '*primmikerios* of the court', see Guilland, *Recherches* I, 303–4.

[38] The Hyaleas family may have been established in Asia Minor from the eleventh century. Anna Komnene (11.5.2–4) mentions a Hyaleas, *doux* of Smyrna. A *protopansebastos* Michael Hyaleas is attested as an assessor in a case of 1216 for the monastery of St Paul on Mt Latros (MM IV, 290).

[39] For a discussion of Akrop.'s career and his insertion of himself into the narrative, see the Introduction, 19–23, 44–6.

[40] Ferjančić (*Despoti*, 65–9) assumes that Michael also received the title of despot from the emperor John at this time (1252) but see the discussion above at §49.

[41] Theodore Komnenos Doukas' son, Demetrios, had been taken prisoner by the emperor John III in 1246, after his conquest of Thessalonike: §46.5. This is the last mention of Theodore in the sources.

[42] Easter Day, 20 April 1253.

[43] The *protovestiarios* Alexios Raoul was one of the emperor's 'chosen' men: see §40. Members of his family were large property owners in the region of Smyrna (MM IV, 259; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 175–6), while he was related to the emperor John through marriage to his brother's daughter. For this brother, not known by name, see Polemis, *Doukai*, no. 73, p. 109. See Fassoulakis, *The Byzantine Family of Raoul-Ral(l)es*, 15–16. Alexios Raoul and his sons suffered under Theodore II: Pach. I, 153.21–155.5; below, §75. As *protovestiarios*, Raoul held a military appointment. See also below at §60.5 for George Mouzalon. There is no evidence of a ceremonial role known for this title-holder from the twelfth century (Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 196) and from the fourteenth century (Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 198–203).

[44] Ochrid was one of Michael II's possessions in 1246: §46. Although it is not mentioned among the places ceded by Michael in the agreement of 1252 (§49.34, 35), it is listed here as part of the emperor John's inspection tour of his newly acquired territory. As Ochrid is mentioned along with Deavolis and Kastoria, both of which went over to the emperor as a result of Petraliphas' desertion to him (see §49.27), it may be that Ochrid was also under Petraliphas' control or, more likely, Goulamos' (see §49.30), and was ceded to the emperor by negotiation with these men but not with Michael II.

50. When he had passed by Thessalonike and through Visaltia,[1] he encamped at Philippi[2] for no small reason, it seemed to him.[3] For Nicholas Manglavites of Melenikon[4] had denounced Michael Palaiologos[5] (the previously mentioned son of the *megas domestikos*) to the emperor when he was in Vodena.[6] Since it was not the time for inquiry into such matters but for campaign and battle, the case was set aside by the emperor until a suitable hour. So it was then that the emperor came to investigate the matter; he set up a court, appointed judges and assembled an illustrious tribunal.[7]

The case was as follows. When Demetrios Tornikes died, the *megas domestikos* was still alive and in Thessalonike,[8] while his son Michael was at Melenikon and Serres, and when Michael learned of Tornikes' death he was distressed and appeared sullen to those who chanced upon him; for Tornikes' wife was the first cousin of the *megas domestikos*.[9] As usually happens in such matters, one of the inhabitants of Melenikon,***[10] by name, asked another, called***, for what reason Michael Komnenos looked sullen. The one said—and he knew the reason[11]—'Demetrios Tornikes died. He was his relation and administrator of public affairs. He was distressed on both counts.' The other said, 'I don't think so. He would not have been so troubled and grieved because of Tornikes. But it seems that this came to pass on account of that man's superior.[12] And if this is so, alas for us! Our affairs, which are now untroubled and have achieved a state of calm, will again be thrown into disorder and turbulence.' Then the other[13] said,

> But, friend, even if something like this has happened, even so our affairs will not go badly, for the *megas domestikos* lives in Thessalonike governing it, and this Michael Komnenos, his son, is guardian over our territory. Governed by such great men we would never experience a cosmic cataclysm.[14] Besides, since Thamar, sister of Kaliman the Bulgarian ruler, is still unwed, she might enter into a marriage alliance with Michael Komnenos[15] and there will be treaties between us and the Bulgarians.

They talked of these things while Michael Komnenos knew nothing [about it].[16]

One of the two men went to the said Manglavites and reported this to him; he referred it to the emperor. Thereupon, both men were detained and questioned concerning the things that had been said. The one accused, the other defended. The latter said, 'He has spoken truthfully, for he did hear this from me. However, it was not with knowledge of Komnenos that I spoke; these statements came from me.' He was then tortured[17] concerning this but each time he asserted that Michael Komnenos knew nothing at all about this. Thereupon, a military proof was prepared for them—since there were no witnesses—the trial by battle.[18] Both men were armed, entered the arena,[19] engaged each other, and the accused was defeated; he was thrown from the horse, while the accuser took the victory. Then he was carried off alive, for he was not mortally wounded, and was again questioned so that he might confess the truth. But he held to his previous statement and protested that Michael Komnenos knew nothing at all.

Since it seemed that the emperor would learn the truth by greater torture, as he was the kind of person to make more exacting inquiries, he applied the test by death to the man.[20] The hands of the man who had been condemned to die

by the sword were tied behind him, while his eyes were covered with a linen cloth, for this was the customary way for condemned men to be prepared and to receive the stroke of annihilation. So when these things also had been arranged in this way and the prisoner had been ordered to bend his neck in order to receive the severance of his head, he was again questioned concerning the things which were being investigated. But he confirmed with the most chilling oaths that Michael Komnenos shared no knowledge at all with regard to these things. And so, he was spared from taking the road to death, but he went on his way to prison, and he was in shackles and confinement. The entire investigation came to bear on Michael Komnenos.[21]

Those to whose lot it had fallen, supposedly, to judge him used to say to him, 'Since some nefarious statements have been uttered concerning you, you must confute them through some miracle-working.' (This was the proof by red-hot iron.) And he used to reply—for he had truth helping him—[22]

> If there were someone accusing me of something I might fight against him
> and prove him to be lying. But since there is no accuser present, on whose
> account am I being judged? If, on the other hand, you want me to work miracles,
> I am not the sort of person to work wonders. If an iron which has
> been made red-hot should be placed in the hand of a man who is a living being,
> I do not know how it would not burn it, unless perhaps he were
> carved by Pheidias from stone or by Praxiteles, or were made of bronze.

He used to reply thus and—by Themis[23]—quite justly. The metropolitan of Philadelphia, Phokas, was also present at these events. The emperor liked him and showed him much favour; this was the case not because of his virtue but because of his shamelessness. For once when the emperor inquired about some public matter, he spoke out frankly and said, 'O, emperor, why did you ask us just now, since you always do what you yourself think you should do?' He said this, and at that time the emperor complained indignantly and said to those who were present, 'How is it that the metropolitan made such an insolent remark and you put up with it?' But a short time later he welcomed him in a friendly manner, honoured him and had him as his advisor in worldly matters. So it was on that occasion also that the emperor used him as an assistant.[24] Taking Michael Komnenos aside, he said this—I heard the conversation—:[25]

> You are a noble man and have been engendered by noble ancestors. You must therefore reflect and do that which is right for the sake of your reputation, your good faith, and all your family. Since there is no proof from witnesses in your case, you must produce the truth by means of the red-hot iron.

Very nobly and bravely and as painters might delineate someone who is fearless in battle, he said,

> I do not know how such a thing is called *hagion*, my lord,
> but I am a sinful man and cannot work such wonders. But if you, being a metropolitan and a man of God, advise me to do this, put on all your holy attire, as you are accustomed to enter the holy sanctuary and to appeal to God, then, heat up the iron for me with your hands with which you touch the divine sacrifice, the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ sacrificed on behalf of the entire world and which is ever sacrificed by you priests and hierarchs, and with your own holy hands place the iron in my hand, I have faith in the Lord Christ that He will overlook my every sin and work the truth by a miracle.[26]

Michael Komnenos spoke thus. The metropolitan said, 'O good young man, this is not our Roman practice[27] but neither is it ecclesiastical tradition, nor did it derive from the laws or, earlier, from the divine and holy canons. The method is barbarian and unknown among us. It is put into practice by imperial order only.'[28] And Michael said, 'O mighty hierarch[29] of God, if I had been born of barbarians and had grown up with barbarian customs or had been brought up from childhood with such laws, I might pay my penalty in the barbarian way. But if I am a Roman, from Romans, let my trial come to an end in accordance with Roman laws and written traditions.'

That man was amazed at the words of such a young man—for Michael Komnenos was completing his 27th year[30]—and at the fact that although he was in misfortune, the nobility of his spirit did not sink nor did the shrewdness of his mind slacken. He went to the emperor; I do not know all that he said but, at any rate, he must have said whatever he had heard. Although the emperor had made a great attempt, he did not find Michael Komnenos guilty in respect of anything, even though he had driven the guiltless to guilt by the force of words or scourges. All gave their decision, both the Latins and the Romans, and especially the Latins, since they are freer in speech towards their masters: Michael Komnenos was innocent according to all. I myself heard this, since I was present at the judgement and with me was John Makrotos. We also were included by the emperor with those who were supposedly giving judgement, like those who, differing in no way from wood, are made to stand there. For the emperor wanted everyone to vote with him against Michael Komnenos, but we said nothing,[31] since Michael Komnenos was being judged without reason. For he was loved—the truth is loved—not by us alone but also by all those in office, the generals, the soldiers and the common people themselves.[32] To the young he was pleasant and gentle in conversation, gracious in speech and most skilful in his business. To the old he seemed mature in thought and intelligence and he was welcomed by them. These

things, then, happened to him, I think, by way of a test of the Almighty. For since God intended to raise him to the imperial eminence, he tried him with the fire of torture and by the test of the smelting-furnace, so that when he should ascend the imperial throne he would not easily believe slander and false accusations, nor make decisions quickly, because he had acquired the power to do whatever he wished.[33] Indeed, He tried him in many other instances, as my narrative will reveal as it continues.

At the end of this trial the emperor said—and I heard his words—'Alas, pitiable one, from what glory you have fallen.' This was because it had been the emperor's wish to give his granddaughter Eirene, the eldest daughter of his son, the emperor Theodore, to Michael Komnenos as a wife; she was Michael's niece, the daughter of his second cousin. In the reign of the emperor John this [sort of thing] happened also in many other cases and it was customary for such things to occur. For even though it was prohibited by the church, it is allowed to the emperors for the sake of public welfare and expediency.[34]

§50 *Akrop. devotes many pages to a detailed account of the trial of Michael Komnenos at Philippi in the autumn of 1253. As the most extensive description of a trial for treason in Byzantium and also as one that mentions trial by battle and ordeal by hot iron, the scene has attracted much attention and speculation. Pach. (I, 37–9) is the other source for this episode in Michael's life (see below §50.7) but in the modern literature Akrop.'s version has been favoured over that of Pach. because Akrop. was an eyewitness and a judge, as he reminds his readers at three points: see Heis. 97.8–9; 99.6–10; 100.4. However, the exceptional length of the account and devotion to detail are not so much the consequence of Akrop.'s participation and first-hand knowledge as of his interest in clearing Michael's name and in showing off his admirable qualities. For these reasons his version of the trial can be studied for his ability to construct a case more than for the history of trial by ordeal at Byzantium. See Macrides, 'George Akropolites' rhetoric', 205–6. See the Introduction, 61–2. For points of convergence in the accounts of Akrop. and Pach., see §50.15 and the Introduction, 72–4.*

[1] Visaltia is the region north of Lake Volve and to the west of the Strymon river: N. G. L. Hammond, *A history of Macedonia* I (Oxford, 1972), map 17, 192–3.

[2] Philippi, mentioned above (§43), appears to be a base for the Nicaean armies in the 'western' territories, judging from this passage and the reference at §43.10.

[3] By interjecting, 'it seemed to him', Akrop. calls attention to the emperor John's point of view which, as we learn, differs from his own. This is the first of many indications that Akrop. does not agree with the emperor.

[4] Manglavites is described above (§44.4) as 'one of the most prominent among the inhabitants of Melenikon'. He was responsible for persuading the people of the town to subject themselves to the emperor John in 1246.

[5] This is a rare reference to Michael as 'Palaiologos'. See §49: Michael Komnenos Palaiologos; otherwise, Michael Komnenos.

[6] The emperor was at Vodena in 1252 and spent the winter of 1252–3 there: §49.

[7] In his account Pach. (I, 37–9) does not speak of a trial or a court. He refers to the suspicion in which Michael was held and his imprisonment. See the Introduction, 72. It may be that Akrop. emphasizes the formality of the investigation, using technical language (*δικαστήριον*, *κριτάς*, *κριτήριον*), to demonstrate that despite all this effort on the part of the emperor, Michael Komnenos could not be found guilty of anything. Only two judges are specifically named by Akrop., Makrotos and Akrop. (see §49 for their functions at this time). Members of the army, including the Latin soldiers, were also asked to give their judgement (see at §50.11).

[8] The date of Demetrios Tornikes' death, before that of the *megas domestikos* Andronikos Palaiologos, cannot be determined precisely, as that of Andronikos is also not known. Andronikos died sometime after 1248 and before 1252 (see §46.6; §49.8, 20); therefore, Tornikes' death can be dated only in relation to this period. The conversation which took place at the time of his death was reported to the emperor John in 1252 (see §50.6), as this was the emperor's first expedition to the west since 1246.

[9] Akrop. is the source for the relationship between the men. The name of Tornikes' wife, Andronikos Palaiologos' cousin, is unknown. See Schmalzbauer, 'Die Tornikioi in der Palaiologenzeit', 117–18, and above, §49.19. For a son of this marriage, Constantine Tornikes, see §57.7.

[10] There are lacunae in the text where the names should have appeared.

[11] By inserting this phrase Akrop. shows the reader what he believes.

[12] This man's statement is intentionally obscure. He hints that the cause of Michael's demeanour lies not in Tornikes' death but rather has something to do with the emperor John, his 'superior' (*ἐπὶ τῷ κρείττονι ἐκείνου*). Akrop. (see Heis. 99.19–20; *Opera* II, 17.26), Blem., Theodore II (Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 118 n. 78), and Pach. (I, 209.13) use *ὁ κρείττων* to refer to the Almighty, but this meaning is impossible in this context because of the demonstrative pronoun, *ἐκείνου*, which follows. The interpretation of the phrase 'that man's superior' as the emperor John is reinforced by Skout. (503.11–12) who understands the phrase in this way, adding in explanation the words, 'disclosing the emperor'.

[13] The text needs to be emended to read 'the other'. Skout. assumes a change of speaker at this point (*Κἀκεῖνος ἔφησεν*: 503.14) and this is consistent with

the exclamation, 'But, friend'. The statement that follows is therefore that of the first conversant who believed Michael Komnenos was sullen because of Tornikes' death. It is this speaker's assertions, and the need to ascertain whether Michael shared these plans and thoughts with the speaker, which form the basis of the investigation.

[14] 'Cosmic cataclysm' is the expression used by Euthymios Tornikes to describe the fall of Constantinople in 1204: Darrouzès, 'Les discours d'Euthyme Tornikès (1200–5)', 82.28–83.1; also Skout. (466.30).

[15] For the Bulgarian tsar Kaliman (Koloman I, 1241–6) and his sister Thamar, see §39.14, 15. According to Pach. (I, 37.11–17), Michael was accused of having made a secret pact with the despot Michael which involved a marriage alliance. This speaker's comment gives an indication of Pach.'s version of the accusations against Michael. Also in favour of Pach.'s version is the resolution of the case. Michael Komnenos was married to the emperor John's grand-niece (§51) and transferred to a post in Asia Minor (§64.1, 2). Another indication that Pach. is to be believed is that just before the 'trial' Akrop. refers to the 'conspiracy' of Michael II against the emperor John (§49.6). See the Introduction, 72–3.

[16] By inserting this statement, Akrop. shows again what he believes about the matter, foreclosing the issue.

[17] Torture was applied by Roman law to elicit testimony: *ODB*, s.v. 'torture'.

[18] The first part of the investigation dealt with establishing the truth of the claim that Michael Komnenos knew nothing about the statements made. Since the person accused of having knowledge of these plans from Michael repeatedly denied this, and there were no witnesses, recourse was made to trial by battle. Judicial combat or duel was applied in the west in cases of treason, among others, when 'other means of discovering the truth were not available': Bartlett, *Trial by fire and water*, 26, 103–26. Anna Komnene describes a judicial duel between two Normans 'released to fight in accordance with the law of the Celts' (v.5.1), thus implying that this procedure was foreign to Byzantium. However, Pach. (I, 37.23–39.1) states that Michael Komnenos was willing to engage in single combat 'in accordance with an old (*archaion*) custom which prevails among emperors in unproved denunciations'. He thus implies that judicial combat was not new to Byzantium at the time of Michael's trial. It should be noted that although this practice was not a procedure of Roman law, no one objected to it or made any comment on it to this effect, unlike the ordeal by hot iron (see below, §50.28). According to Pach. (I, 131.21–4) Michael promised to ban trial by duel and hot iron when he became emperor. See the Introduction, 74 and n. 445.

[19] The word 'arena', *στάδιον*, used here of the scene of the duel, could be a reference to the ancient stadium at Philippi. The word is also used, however,

metaphorically for the place where the fight against injustice takes place. For the expression 'the arena of the courts', see, e.g. Manuel I Komnenos' novel on court recess: Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I', 140.22–30.

[20] Akrop. makes several ironic remarks in this passage, directed at the emperor John's procedures.

[21] After the failure of the trial by battle to provide definitive evidence for or against Michael Komnenos, the burden of providing proof of innocence fell on Michael himself.

[22] In this passage Akrop. indicates, again, Michael's innocence 'for he had truth helping him' and criticizes the emperor's procedures, through use of the word 'supposedly' in connection with the judges. By using the imperfective, 'used to say to him', 'he used to reply', Akrop. indicates that the suggestion that Michael clear his name by the proof by red-hot iron was made more than once. Akrop. is the only source to mention that proof by iron (*μύδρον*, *σίδηρος*, *ἅγιον*) was suggested to Michael.

[23] Akrop. gives Michael the opportunity to show his clear thinking and eloquence in this reply. Akrop. makes several classical allusions, to Themis, goddess of justice and assemblies (*Od.* 2.68–9), to the sculptors Pheidias and Praxiteles. See the Introduction, 61. On Pheidias and Praxiteles, see N. G. Polites, *Λαογραφικὰ Σύμμεικτα Β*' (Athens, 1975, 2nd edn), 3–7, who corrects a misinterpretation of the passage.

[24] Akrop. introduces the metropolitan of Philadelphia, Phokas, to the proceedings in an aside which explains how he came to be the emperor's advisor. He was one of the people who fulfilled the role of the administrator of public affairs after the death of Demetrios Tornikes. See §49 where he is first mentioned as an ambassador to Michael II of Epiros. Akrop.'s dislike of the man is evident. He discredits Phokas, and, by implication, the emperor, for his lack of good judgement in choosing such an advisor. It follows that Akrop. is not impressed by the advice Phokas gives Michael.

[25] This is the first of three statements of Akrop.'s presence and the eyewitness character of his account. See also below at §50.31. The entire exchange between Phokas and Michael took place in private and was heard by no one apart from Akrop.

[26] Here, as above, Akrop. constructs Michael's speech in such a way as to underline Michael's cool, rational, demeanour. Akrop. reminds us again of the parallel with art—'as painters might delineate ...'—shows Michael cleverly playing on the word *hagion* which means both 'holy' and 'hot iron' (see Pach. I, 55.5) and has Michael uphold the Roman legal tradition and ecclesiastical law. Michael flatters Phokas ('with your holy hands') and puts the onus on him by suggesting that he should place the iron in Michael's hands. The ordeal by iron did include the participation of clergymen, both in the

west and in Byzantine cases, but not the kind Michael is suggesting. For clergymen as overseers of the procedure, see the case which came before Apokaukos (Fögen, 'Ein heisses Eisen', 85–96, esp. 96.39–42; Kant. II, 172.24–173.6). For the west, see Bartlett, *Trial by fire and water*, 90–1, 98.

[27] For *κατάστασις* (Heis. 98.5) which I have translated as 'practice' here and as 'protocol' above (§21), see §21.8.

[28] The metropolitan declines Michael's suggestion, only then remembering that 'this is not our Roman practice.... The method is barbarian', thus providing Michael with his next argument. The foreign (barbarian) nature of the iron is commented on also by Apokaukos (Fögen, 'Ein heisses Eisen', 95.25) and Chomatenos (ed. Prinzing, 303.16). Although specific cases of ordeal by iron are mentioned for the first time in post-1204 sources, this does not rule out the possibility that this 'barbarian' practice was used in Byzantium before 1204. See the tenth/eleventh-century Byzantine scholiast commenting on line 264 of Sophocles' *Antigone*: 'The Romans do this to this day, led astray in a pagan manner': P. N. Papageorgios, *Scholia in Sophoclis Tragoedias Vetera* (Leipzig, 1888), 231. Phokas shifts the responsibility onto the emperor when he claims that 'It is put into practice by imperial order only.' Akrop. is the only source to make this statement. According to Pach. (I, 53.30–55.10), the emperor Theodore II insisted on trial by hot iron as a proof for those he suspected of sorcery against him, but this does not mean that it was always practised 'by imperial order only', as modern studies have asserted. Rather, this is what Akrop. would have his readers believe. See the Introduction, 62. When Pach. (I, 131.22–4) relates that Michael Palaiologos promised to end trial by battle and by hot iron when he became emperor, he indicates that it was powerful men in office who imposed the trial by hot iron.

[29] *Ἱεράρχης*, the etymological equivalent of *ἀρχιερεύς*, used here and above (Heis. 97.25), can refer to a bishop, archbishop, metropolitan or patriarch. See Pach. I, 38 n. 2.

[30] According to Pach. (II, 667.7–8), Michael was 58 when he died in 1282. Thus, his date of birth was 1224. Akrop. is wrong by two years.

[31] Word-play on *logos*, 'speech' and 'reason'.

[32] Akrop. combines encomium for Michael Palaiologos with criticism of the emperor John: see the Introduction, 62. He is explicit finally here on the emperor's desire to find Michael guilty. Akrop. and John Makrotos (see §49) were 'supposedly' chosen as judges along with others but only 'supposedly' (*τάχα* is the word Akrop. chooses here and at Heis. p. 96.6 to express the pretence being made of a real trial). The emperor would accept only one vote, a vote against Michael. Akrop. plays on the meanings of *logos*, 'word' and 'reason' and gives the real reason why Michael was innocent: everyone loved him. The Latins who were also asked their decision in this case are soldiers in

the army. See §9.9, §59.20; Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 28–9. For their future role as Michael's supporters, see §76.

[33] Akrop. claims that God was testing Michael, in preparation for the imperial throne. Akrop. rarely invokes God's name; when he does, it is more often than not associated with Michael Palaiologos. See the Introduction, 55. Akrop. evokes the ordeal by hot iron, 'fire . . . smelting-furnace', which Michael underwent metaphorically, 'so that he would not easily believe slander', an indirect contrast with the present emperor.

[34] The emperor John had planned to marry Michael to his granddaughter Eirene, Theodore II's eldest daughter (for her see §73), a union which was within the prohibited degrees of marriage, since Michael and Theodore Laskaris were second cousins, as sons of two granddaughters of Alexios III (see §5.5, 6). Eirene was thus Michael's 'niece' (*ἀνεψιά*). For this term in Akrop. and Pach., see Failler, 'Pachymeriana quaedam', 189 and n. 4. See also above at §18.4 for Theodore I's failed attempt to marry his daughter to his brother-in-law.

51. The emperor, having thus dismissed the case, went to the east, while Michael Komnenos, as I said, was held in suspicion. But the distinguished nature of his family and his kinship[1] with him and, further, his intimacy with the magnates did not allow the emperor to hold him in contempt. What does he do? He sends him to the patriarch.[2] Manuel was then steering the rudder of the patriarchate, a man of pious life and chaste behaviour (even though he had been married) but, otherwise, one who had no experience of letters, nor was able to unravel the meaning of what he read.[3] The emperor wrote to him to place Michael Komnenos under a penalty and to bind him with oaths that he would never try to meditate treachery against the emperor but would maintain a pure disposition towards the ruler.[4] This was done, and the emperor received Michael Komnenos and joined him in marriage to Theodora, the granddaughter of his brother, the *sebastokrator* Isaac Doukas. Her father, John, the son of the *sebastokrator*, had left her as his only child, dying while still a young man, leaving his wife Eudokia, daughter of John Angelos, a widow, and his daughter Theodora, an orphan. She it was who by good fortune married Michael Komnenos at that time. For her mother Eudokia, although young, was very ready to endure widowhood; she loved virtue and was entirely devoted to God. Because of this she had recompense from God in the marriage alliance.[5] And that was the state of these affairs.

§51 *The aftermath of Michael Palaiologos' trial for treason is presented here, the oaths he took and his marriage. Pach. presents a more extensive account of*

the way in which the emperor was reconciled with Michael. He differs from Akrop. on a number of points. See below §51.2, and the Introduction, 72.

[1] John III's 'kinship' with Michael was through his wife, Eirene. See the Introduction, 58, §50.34, Genealogical Table 2.

[2] Pach. (I, 39.1–41.3) states that Michael was not only held in suspicion but was also in prison for a long time after the trial. According to him, it was the patriarch who took the lead in persuading the emperor to forgive Michael. The reconciliation took place while the emperor was in the Nymphaion region. Failler, 'Chronologie', 5–16, esp. 12, dates this reconciliation to the late summer–early autumn of 1254, just before the emperor's death. But see at §52.1, for an earlier date, the winter of 1253–4. Furthermore, Pach. (I, 41.1) does not mention a marriage alliance, as does Akrop. below, but rather states that Michael received a higher office at this time, that of *megas konostablos*. See §64.2.

[3] Neither Akrop. nor Blem. thought highly of the patriarch Manuel II (1243–54) who was *protopapas* of the imperial clergy before becoming patriarch. See Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §69 (p. 35.11–18), II, §50 (p. 67.1–14); Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 55 n. 47; 129 n. 123; Xanthopoulos, PG 147.465D. For the dates of his patriarchate, see Laurent, 'La chronologie des patriarches', 138–9, and the correction by Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 83 n. 126. Skout. (503.28–30) omits Akrop.'s negative remarks concerning Manuel's education but, like Akrop., he refers to Manuel's earlier marriage. See the Introduction, 48, for Blem.'s influence on Akrop.

[4] The oaths of loyalty to the emperor which were sworn before the synod, according to Pach., had as their surety the penalty or sanction (*ἐπιτιμίῳ*: Akrop.; *ἐπιτίμησις*: Pach. I, 39.11, 25) of excommunication. See also, Oikonomides, 'Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067)', 102–28, 111–16; Svoronos, 'Le serment de fidelité à l'empereur byzantin et sa signification constitutionnelle', 106–42. Skout. (503.30–1) indicates that even after this oath-taking Michael was held in suspicion.

[5] In his typikon for the monastery of St Demetrios, Michael Palaiologos refers to his marriage to the emperor John's 'niece' whom the emperor 'loved the same as a daughter' (ed. Grégoire, 451). Akrop.'s account here of Michael's marriage to Theodora, granddaughter of Isaac Doukas, contains an encomium of her mother, Eudokia, whose piety and almsgiving are fulsomely praised by Skout. (504.10–13). According to Pach. (I, 217.6–7), she was called the '*megale kyria*'. The abbreviated version of the *History* adds that Eudokia was an aunt of the Strategopouloi (Heis. 253.17–18): see A. Failler, 'Pachymeriana altera', *REB* 46 (1988), 71. For Isaac Doukas and Theodora see Genealogical Table 3; Polemis, *Doukai*, nos 73, 74 (p. 109); Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I/1, no. 122, pp 114–15 (Theodora); see A.-M. Talbot,

'Empress Theodora Palaiologina, wife of Michael VIII', *DOP* 46 (1992), 295–303. For Eudokia (Angelina) see also *PLP*, fasc. 3, no. 6228. Nothing more is known of Theodora's father John, while Theodora's grandfather, John Angelos, Eudokia's father, is perhaps to be identified with the *doux* of the Thrakesion theme, known from documents of 1235–6, in which he is called the 'uncle' of the emperor John (MM IV, 36, 40). This John Angelos is not to be confused with the John Angelos mentioned in §58, §60, §77, although Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 142, considers them to be the same person. See §58.4.

52. When the emperor arrived in the eastern parts and that year had passed, he came again to Nicaea, the capital city of Bithynia. It was towards the end of the winter; February was coming to an end.[1] The emperor was sitting on his bed one evening—part of the night had passed—when he suddenly became dumb, fell forward on the bed, and was completely speechless from that time on. The doctors' skill rendered assistance in this; they scarified his legs and applied spurge to the scarifications,[2] and did all the other things their profession instructed. But the emperor lay motionless all that night, the following day, and again the next night; for his illness was apoplexy,[3] and it was so severe that it extended to paralysis and dumbness. At all events, he breathed with difficulty and regained consciousness, but his complexion had changed.[4] He sought then to reach Nymphaion and to arrive before Palm Sunday, when the emperor was accustomed to make a triumphal entry. Increasing, therefore, his rate of travel, he reached Nymphaion and there performed the triumph for Palm Sunday and also celebrated the day of Resurrection.[5]

From then on he stayed in those parts, worn out and oppressed every few days by the illness which had hold of him. Sometimes while he was in the palace[6] he would fall prostrate onto the bed, dumb, while at other times he would be seized by the illness as he rode horseback and proceeded on the road, and those who were with him would hold him and protect him for a time so that it would not become known to the people. Upon recovering consciousness, he would return to the palace slowly. Sometimes he would be carried in the palace by his retainers,[7] enthroned on a litter. But when the illness grew stronger, the emperor's body weakened. The attacks began to occur altogether more frequently. He had a wasting away of the flesh and, what is more dangerous, emaciation[8] afflicted him.

Since, then, the illness defeated the skill of the doctors, he wished to go to Smyrna to venerate Christ there and make supplication and gain His mercy,[9] in a desire to find a little relief. When he arrived he did this but he found no respite from the affliction; as he was staying in the Periklystra area—this is a place near Smyrna, given this name because it is watered all around by many springs[10]—he felt a greater or, rather, worse affliction. Leaving from there,

then, he arrived at Nymphaion in a very bad state. He did not go to the imperial dwellings, but put up the royal tents[11] in the imperial gardens near the place. And it was there that he died, on the third day of the kalends of November,[12] having lived 62 years[13] (as those who had more precise knowledge about him said). For 33 of these years he had reigned well and nobly.[14] For he was a gentle man[15] who was always inclined to compassion.[16] Gifts he made less use of for his own subjects, but to foreigners, and especially to those who came as ambassadors, he extended a more open hand, that he might be praised by them.[17] He yielded to passion for females from the time when his wife, the empress Eirene, died;[18] he had affairs openly, with many and sundry, but he was discomfited most of all by the woman from Italy who came as an attendant of his German wife, the empress Anna.[19] She became the empress's rival and was called Marchesina. He was so dependent on her love that he gave her red-coloured shoes to wear and a saddle and bridle of the same colour, as well as more people to escort her than the proper empress had; he did much else too, a slave to her desires.[20] This emperor was capable of endurance in battle. He did not welcome war fought in close combat for he was afraid of the fickleness of Ares[21] and took into account the uncertainty connected with this. But by exercising patience and by spending the spring in the land of the enemy and passing the summer season and seeing out the late autumn, and even sometimes spending the winter, he took the victory, for the enemy was worn out by the emperor's stubbornness and obstinacy.[22]

So, then, the emperor John died, having left the empire to his son Theodore,[23] who was coming to the end of his 33rd year. He was as old as his father's reign was long, for his birth more or less coincided with his father's proclamation as emperor.[24] It was the hope of all Romans, and especially of those who served in the army and those who lived in the palace, that they would gain many good things from the new emperor. And if there was anyone who had been distressed by his father or had suffered either privation of money or property, he had hopes of finding a deliverance from these misfortunes. That, at any rate, is what everyone hoped.[25] For his young age, his charming manner towards all, his gentle behaviour with his companions and his cheerful discourse with those he met (all this was deceptive and a hypocritical mask) made them imagine these things. But they missed the mark and 'their treasure turned to coal', as the proverb says.[26] For he was so bad to his subjects and he treated those under his control in such a way that they all called his father, the emperor, blessed.[27] And if someone suffered very badly at Theodore's hands, he wished he had departed this life before his [John's] death and he longed to end his life and to be numbered among the majority.[28]

§52 The events described here, the emperor John's illness and death, date from late 1253 to late 1254. Akrop. gives a detailed description of the course of the emperor's illness over several months, its symptoms and treatment. He uses technical terms (§52.2, 3, 8) drawn from Galen, and differs from Pach. and Greg. in his diagnosis (§52.3). Although Akrop. does not mention having studied medicine, his interest in the body/physiology, evident in other passages also (§13.19; §24.22; §42.7; §59.3), may show the influence of his teacher Blem. who was the son of a doctor and a student of medicine. Attributed to Blem. is a medical manuscript containing works which show knowledge of Galen. On this see Kuzes, 'Les oeuvres médicales de Nicéphore Blémmydès selon les manuscrits existants', 56–75. See the Introduction, 47. On Akrop.'s 'obituary' of the emperor, see the Introduction, 55–8. See the contrasting account of John III by Skout. 506–9, and discussion in the Introduction, 68.

[1] Akrop. indicates that the emperor reached the 'eastern parts' sometime before the end of 1253 and that he went to Nicaea in the winter of 1254. Skout. (504.14–18=*Additamenta*, no. 31, p. 284) gives more detail about the emperor's movements. He states that the emperor arrived at Nicaea in February to make arrangements for security and protection, because of fear of the Tatars, and that he was there only some days before he was taken ill. It is therefore possible that the emperor spent the time from his arrival in the east in the late autumn/early winter until February in Nymphaion, where he was accustomed to winter (§41, §84) and then went to Nicaea in late February. If this version of his movements is correct, it would be possible to date Michael Palaiologos' oath taking and reconciliation with the emperor which took place in the Nymphaion area, according to Pach., to the winter of 1253–4. On this see §51.2.

[2] For 'scarification' (ἀμυχαί) and 'spurge' (ἐφόλβιον or εὐφόρβιον), see Durling, *Galen*, 39, 172. The surface of the skin was broken and poultices of spurge were applied. Spurge, a strong skin irritant, may have aided in the scarification but also, as a cathartic and a 'sharp' drug, it was able to 'cut' the viscous humour, thick phlegm, which was thought to cause the apoplexy or epilepsy. See Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 78; Riddle, *Dioscurides on pharmacy and medicine*, 22–3, 113–14, 125.

[3] Akrop. differs from Pach. (I, 99.27–101.3) and Greg. (I, 49.21–50.9) in calling the illness apoplexy: see Durling, *Galen*, 64–8. The other two authors refer to 'epileptic seizures' and in modern historiography John III, like his son Theodore II (see §74), is included among epileptic emperors. See, however, Makris, 'Zur Epilepsie in Byzanz', 363–404, esp. 384–92, for criticism of this interpretation of their illnesses. John III's symptoms—falling, speechlessness and paralysis—conform only in part with epilepsy. The 'falling evil' embraced a wide range of diseases; apoplexy, Akrop.'s diagnosis, and epilepsy were not

clearly distinguished. Most medieval authors agreed that they were closely related, apoplexy being the more powerful affliction. The main difference was that in apoplexy the patient neither felt nor moved, whereas during an epileptic attack, he did move. See Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 40, 45, 49, 101–2, 127.

[4] See Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*, 40: In the 'apoplectic type' of epilepsy... 'the patient lies pale and motionless, in a deep sleep approaching a state of torpor, his mouth open, he breathes slowly and noisily'.

[5] Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, 'the day of Resurrection', fell on 5 and 12 April in 1254. These feasts were central to imperial ceremonial. Akrop. makes reference to the triumphal nature of the Palm Sunday ceremony by using the words *θριαμβεύειν*, *βαιοφόρον θρίαμβον* (Heis. 102.10, 11–12). In 1254 the ceremony may have had a special significance, in view of the emperor's recent victorious return from the west. This is Akrop.'s first indication of imperial ceremonial with relation to Nymphaion, the site of the palace and court from the reign of Theodore I: see the Introduction, 87–8. For Constantinople in the later period, where Palm Sunday was celebrated by a procession (*peripatos*) from the palace to the church, see Ps.-Kod., 224–6, 227.20–228.3; Heisenberg, 'Aus der Geschichte und Literatur der Palaiologenzeit', 82–4.

[6] Akrop. refers to the 'palace' at Nymphaion in a variety of ways: *παλατίῳ* (Heis. 102.15); *ἐν τοῖς βασιλικοῖς... οἰκήμασιν* (Heis. 103.13–14); *ἐν τοῖς ἀνακτόροις* (Heis. 102.21). See also §52.11. This palace, part of which is still standing, is thought to have been built in the reign of the emperor John. See Buchwald, 'Laskarid architecture', 261–96. See the Introduction, 87–8, for Nymphaion's significance from Theodore I's reign.

[7] See §38.16 for *oikeioi*.

[8] 'Wasting away of the flesh' (*σύντηξις*) and 'emaciation' (*ἀτροφία*), both technical terms (see Durling, *Galen*, 306, 85), are mentioned by Aristotle, Pr. 8.9: *ἀδυναμία (συμβαίνει) διὰ τὴν τοῦ σώματος ἀτροφίαν καὶ σύντηξιν*. See also the twelfth-century *Timarion* (ed. Romano, 60.309–11): *γαστρόρροια... τὰς σάρκας συντήκουσα*; Theodore II, 'Satire' in *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 193.942–3: *συντήξασα τοῦτον*.

[9] According to Skout. (505.5–11), the emperor went to venerate an icon of Christ. It may have been in the monastery of Kamelaukas which was dedicated to Christ the Saviour and was the most important monastery in Smyrna. See Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 93. Pach. (I, 99.25–101.17) tells a story to illustrate the emperor's boundless generosity and compassion. The episode must date to this time ('when the doctors did not know where to turn, he sought refuge in God'), although Pach. does not expressly connect it with Smyrna. On Smyrna, see §48.11.

[10] For Periklystra, see §39.5.

[11] Ἀνακτορικὴ σκηνή can be used of any structure in which the emperor resided, including the palace (see Blem.'s ἀνακτορικὴν σκήνωσιν for palace: *Autobiographia* I, §6 (p. 5.1–3), I, §12 (p. 8.10) but here Akrop. means a temporary dwelling (cf. §52.6).

[12] Akrop. uses a variety of methods of dating in his work but only here does he refer to the kalends and only for the emperor John does he give a calendar date of death. The date he gives is problematic, however, because the 'third day of the kalends of November' is 30 October, while short chronicle entries give 3 November for his death: Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* II, 195 and n. 72. An indication that the November date is the correct one is Akrop.'s statement at §74 that Theodore began his reign as sole emperor in November. Furthermore, 4 November is the date for the commemoration of the emperor John as a saint: *Life*, ed. Heisenberg, 192. It appears that Akrop., unfamiliar with the Latin system of dating with kalends, really intended to indicate 3 November as the date of death. For Akrop. and dates, see the Introduction, 42–3. The emperor was buried in the monastery of Sosandra, which he founded in the region of Magnesia: see §74.9. It was in this area that he was recognized as a saint and a cult grew. On this, see Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the Palaiologan period', 69–71.

[13] Greg. (I, 50.23) makes the emperor 60 upon death.

[14] For John's accession in December 1221, see §19 and §52.24. For Akrop.'s evaluation of the emperor John's reign, see his funeral oration for the emperor (*Opera* II, 12–29). Contrast Akrop.'s short appreciation here with Skout. (506.6–509.13). See the Introduction, 68 n. 417.

[15] πραότης is an imperial virtue which is associated with king David. Akrop., in his funeral oration for the emperor John, claims that only David outdid the emperor in this category: *Opera* II, 22.26–8. John III is called a 'new David' in the verses for the tomb of the empress Eirene: Hörandner, 'Prodromos-Reminiszenzen bei Dichtern der nikänischen Zeit', 90.40. See §46.3 where this quality is ascribed in the superlative to Andronikos Palaiologos. See the Introduction, 60.

[16] For John III's 'compassion' (φιλάνθρωπος), a reference to the mildness of his punishments, see §23.11 and Akrop.'s funeral oration (*Opera* II, 24).

[17] Skout. (505.22–5) adds that the emperor was generous to his own subjects as well as to foreigners, giving especially to the needy and poor (505.25–6=*Additamenta*, no. 32, p. 284).

[18] See the Introduction, 58 for the empress Eirene, and §39.12 for her death in late 1239.

[19] This is Akrop.'s first and only reference to John III's second marriage. Skout. omits the passage. The marriage appears to be of significance to Akrop.

only as a way of introducing Marchesina (§52.20) and the subject of the emperor's sexual incontinence. On the latter, see the Introduction, 56. Akrop.'s description of John's second wife as 'German' reveals little of the emperor's relations with the west, about which Akrop. says nothing. See Martin, 'Frédéric II, l'empire de Nicée et le "césaropapisme" ', 473–83; the Introduction, 89, on this subject. Anna, known as Constanza (Constancia) in the west, was the daughter of Frederick II and sister of Manfred of Sicily (Pach. I, 117.5–7; 245.1–6; Greg. I, 45.4–47.12; 92.1–6). She was married to John when she was still very young, according to Greg., and he was old, according to Pach. For the verses written on the occasion of their marriage by Nicholas Eirenikos, see Heisenberg, 'Aus der Geschichte und Literatur der Palaiologenzeit', 98–112. Theodore II refers in passing to the (summer) wedding festivities in Nicaea: *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 191.908–192.922.

The date given for the marriage has varied from 1241/2 to 1244 (see Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1779, p. 37; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 24–5 and n. 75). It has now been conclusively shown that this marriage had taken place by May/June 1241; an entry in Andrea Dandolo's chronicle for May/June 1241 refers to the marriage as one that has already taken place: Dandolo, *Chronica*, 298; Kiesewetter, 'Die Heirat zwischen Konstanze-Anna von Hohenstaufen und Kaiser Johannes III. Batatzes von Nikaia', 239–50. For Constanza-Anna's marriage gift from the emperor John, see Marinesco, 'Du nouveau sur Constance de Hohenstaufen, impératrice de Nicée', 451–68; also Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 68–9. She died in 1307 and was buried in Valencia: Miller, '*Σημείωσις περὶ τοῦ τάφου τῆς βασιλίσσης τῆς Νίκαιας ἐν* Valentia', 13–17.

[20] The emperor's affair with the woman known as 'Marchesina' who accompanied Constanza, daughter of Frederick II, to the east, receives much attention from Blem. also. John III's dependence on her and the great number of privileges he extended to her, more than to the 'proper empress', are the subject of Blem.'s ascerbic criticism in his *Autobiographia* and also in an 'Open Letter' in which he describes his public dismissal of Marchesina from the liturgical celebration at which he was officiating. See *Autobiographia*, 35–6, 67; 'Open Letter', in *Autobiographia*, 91–4; Munitiz, 'A "wicked woman" in the 13th century', 529–37. The incident took place sometime after the marriage of Constanza-Anna to John III (1240/1) and before Blem.'s departure from the monastery of St Gregory Thaumatourgos (c. 1248). For the latter tentative date, see Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 24. Although Akrop. does not mention the particular event which provoked Blem.'s rage, he expresses similar sentiments to him, in contrast to Greg. (I, 45.4–47.12) who uses the incident to underline the emperor's humility and contrition. See the Introduction, 49.

It has been assumed that 'Marchesina' is a title and that the woman's real name is not known. See the discussion in Munitiz, 'A "wicked woman" ', 534, nn 112, 113. However, Marchesina is attested as a name in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italy, as is Marchesius. See F. Andrews, *The early Humiliati* (Cambridge, 1999), 161, 174. Furthermore, Constanza's 'attendant' can be identified with the addressee of a letter of pope Alexander IV, a Venetian woman, married by 1255 to a 'nobleman Marcus Baduarius from Venice'. The pope's letter states that she was to inherit property in the kingdom of Sicily (county of Andria, near Barletta), held previously by her aunt: *Les Registres d'Alexandre IV*, ed. Bourel de la Roncière, I, no. 320 (p. 88).

[21] The god of war, Ares, is characterized as 'fickle' (ἀλλοπρόσαλλος) in the *Il.* 5.831, 889.

[22] Akrop. uses the verb δειλιῶν (Heis. 104.12), implying cowardliness on the part of the emperor in his desire to avoid open confrontation with the enemy. In his funeral oration, Akrop. accentuates the emperor's unflagging energy and engagement of the enemy in all seasons (*Opera* II, 17.6–18.4). Here he stresses John's passive, dogged 'stubbornness'. Skout. (505.27–31) emphasizes the emperor's endurance, omitting his fear of the fickleness of war. He adds a long eulogy of the emperor: 506.6–509.13=*Additamenta*, no. 33, pp 284–8.

[23] Pach. (I, 61.20–1) and Greg. (I, 53.1–55.23) state that John did not have his son proclaimed emperor during his lifetime, out of respect for the opinion and choice of his subjects. However, Akrop.'s statement here, 'having left the empire to his son' and his use of the title 'emperor' elsewhere to refer to Theodore, as well as other independent references, show that Theodore had been made co-emperor. See §40.19, and Introduction, 39–40.

[24] Greg. (I. 51.1–4) also refers to the coincidence of Theodore's birth and John III's proclamation. Akrop.'s statement here provides corroborative evidence that John did indeed become emperor in (December) 1221. See §19 for this date. If Theodore was closing 33 years of age (διανύοντι: Heis. 104.21) in November 1254 when his father died, he was about to reach his 33rd birthday in December 1254. Thus, the coincidence of proclamation and birth is actual. The poem by Blem. for the 'newborn emperor', attributed to John IV by Heis., may have been written for the birth of Theodore II in December 1221, since the poem makes allusions to Christmas: *Curriculum vitae*, ed. Heisenberg, 110–11. For Theodore as 'porphyrogennetos' and (Doukas) Laskaris on his coins, see Hendy, *Coinage and money*, 256, and *Catalogue* IV/2, 516. For Theodore's name, see §31.

[25] At the end of his 'obituary' for the emperor John Akrop. gives a 'preview' and prejudgement of Theodore's reign. Also in his funeral oration for John, Akrop. concludes by 'looking forward' to the (even) greater good which the son had to offer as a 'philosopher king' and experienced son of an emperor

(*Opera* II, 26.31–29.16; esp. 29.12–16). In this passage he does not mention Theodore's fitness to rule but rather his charming manner which gave hope to all. In the course of mentioning the hopes which everyone placed in Theodore, Akrop. expresses even more strongly and directly than above the emperor John's lack of generosity. The two groups he singles out as being especially hopeful, 'those . . . in the army . . . and in the palace', were, according to Pach. (I, 59.22–61.2), beneficiaries of the emperor Theodore's inexhaustible generosity. For Akrop.'s *Kaiserkritik* and the contrast with Pach., see the Introduction, 56–7.

[26] *CPG* II, p. 9, p. 145.

[27] An indirect reference to the emperor John's saintliness: *μακαρίζειν*. See the Introduction, 57–8. For the cult, established by 1264/5 (Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §12.8–9) see Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period', 67–71; Polemis, 'Remains of an acoluthia', 542–7.

[28] *οἱ πλείονες*, euphemistic for the dead: Aristophanes, *Ecclesiazusae*, 1073.

53. It was in this way that the emperor Theodore obtained the imperial throne. When he had rendered the emperor his father the prescribed funeral rites[1] and had been seated on the shield, as is the custom, and acclaimed monarch[2] by all, he left Nymphaion and arrived at Philadelphia. This is a great and populous city with inhabitants who are capable of bearing arms and who are especially trained in archery. Since the city is situated on the Persian boundary it causes them always to be fighting with the enemy and makes them familiar with war.[3] When he had stayed there a short time, long enough to send an embassy to the sultan,[4] he left for the area of Bithynia and the capital city of the region, Nicaea.[5]

Since the church was bereft of a patriarch (for the patriarch Manuel had died slightly before the emperor John),[6] it was first necessary that a patriarch be put forward, so that he might carry out the coronation[7] of the emperor in the holy precinct. A person worthy of this throne was sought. The opinion of many was in favour of Nikephoros Blemmydes, my teacher in the principles and teachings of philosophy, a man who from youth had chosen the yoke of the solitary life and was famous for his knowledge as well as his virtue, even though the malice of some, especially the prominent people, not only prevented his virtue from becoming apparent but even attributed some vices to him.[8] However, he was on friendly terms with the emperor and was liked by him; for the emperor claimed him also as his teacher in philosophical studies, in which he [Theodore] took a great deal of pride.[9] Yet Blemmydes, observing the character of the emperor, was rather reluctant concerning the matter.[10] But the emperor himself made a feeble attempt, for he probably preferred him not to accept the charge, for rulers want those who act as patriarchs to be

submissive and moderate in their thinking and to succumb easily to their wishes as if they were commands. This is what happens in the case of boorish men especially, for they are not able to be confident in learning, whereas learned men appear unyielding and oppose the emperors' decrees.

And so the emperor Theodore turned to others for this reason, after he had made a small attempt with the man.[11] But since he was dissatisfied with many,[12] when he learned that there was a monk on Lake Apollonias who had little experience of letters (he had only reached the level of grammar education), who was unordained and named Arsenios,[13] as quickly as he could he sent people to fetch him.[14] And he came. Since Theodore was in a hurry to leave Nicaea, he gave orders to the bishops to ordain him patriarch quickly. And they did so, in one day making him deacon, priest and patriarch.[15]

§53 *The election of Arsenios to the patriarchal throne in 1254 receives more attention than Akrop. usually gives to patriarchal succession (see the Introduction, 47–9). This may be because Blem. was involved; it may also have to do with the severe consequences of Arsenios' patriarchate for Michael VIII's reign. Akrop.'s version of the election corresponds with Blem.'s own, apart from one point. See §53.11. For a different presentation, the Arsenite version, see §53.12, 13, 15 and the Introduction, 68–9.*

[1] Skout. (509.15–17) adds that Theodore performed the funeral rites 'magnificently' and buried his father at Sosandra, a foundation of the emperor John.

[2] Already co-emperor (see §40.19; §74.7), Theodore was now proclaimed sole ruler, *autokrator*. See also the example of Michael IX who was made co-emperor (1281: Pach. III, 99.28–31) but many years later (1294) was raised on the shield and crowned. The late Roman custom of proclamation of an emperor by raising him on a shield fell into disuse sometime before the tenth century but reappears again in written sources in the eleventh century, in Psellos' reference to the elevation on the shield of the usurper Leo Tornikios: Kazhdan, 'The aristocracy and the imperial ideal', 51. Thus, Akrop.'s remark (also Ephraim, 8936–7; Greg. I, 55.1–3), that the elevation of Theodore on the shield was 'customary', is literally true. (See, however, Ostrogorsky, 'Zur Kaisersalbung und Schilderhebung im spätbyzantischen Krönungszeremoniell', 148–52, who argues that the custom was revived in the thirteenth century through Latin influence.) However, there does appear to have been a change in the thirteenth century: the candidate 'sits' on the shield. See §77; Walter, 'Raising on a shield in Byzantine iconography', 133–75, esp. 157–60 and nn. 95, 96. This motif, the raising of the seated candidate, appears also in the romance *Libistros and Rodamne*: Agapitos, ''Η χρονολογικὴ ἀκολουθία

τῶν μυθιστορημάτων Καλλίμαχος, Βελθάνδρος καὶ Λίβιστρος', 130–1. It is partly for this reason that Agapitos dates the romance to the mid-thirteenth century and assigns a 'Nicaean' origin to it.

[3] Philadelphia (Alaşehir), situated on the edge of the Anatolian plateau, was a frontier zone from the late eleventh century. See above §9, §41; Cheynet, 'Philadelphie', 39–40. In this passage Akrop. illustrates well the significance of the two centres of the 'Nicaean empire'. Philadelphia–Nymphaion–Magnesia formed the heartland of the empire, with the richest agricultural lands, the palace, and the mint: Hendy, *Studies*, 116, 444–5. Nicaea was the seat of the patriarch. See the Introduction, 88. Michael VIII likewise went to Philadelphia immediately after his proclamation as emperor in 1259, according to Pach. (I, 139.26–147.4).

[4] Greg. (I, 56.4–7) is more explicit, stating that Theodore renewed and confirmed his father's treaty with the Turks, dated to 1243: §41 and Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1776, p. 36–7. The sultan whom Akrop. never names was Izz al-Din Kaykaus II (1246–61): *EI* IV (1978), 813–14. For him see §61, §64, §65, §69.

[5] On Nicaea, first city of Bithynia, first capital of the 'empire of Nicaea', and seat of the patriarch, see §6, §7, §9, §53.15.

[6] For Manuel, see §51. Ephraim (8945–7) states that the patriarch died two months before the emperor. See also Blem.: 'the emperor and the patriarch, as if by agreement, travelled together to the other world': *Autobiographia* I, §74 (p. 37.1–5); Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 85 and n. 136.

[7] Akrop. refers to the need to appoint a patriarch 'so that he might carry out the coronation of the emperor in the holy precinct', and Blem. (*Autobiographia* I, §74, p. 37.13–15) likewise states that a new patriarch had to be appointed to 'anoint' the emperor. Even though neither says that Theodore was in fact crowned at this time (see §53–4; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 514 and n. 2), we can presume that the coronation and anointing took place. See Ephraim, 8982.

[8] Nikephoros Blemmydes taught Akrop. 'philosophy' for several years, beginning in 1238/9: §32, §39. He was abbot of the monastery of St Gregory Thaumatourgos before he moved to the monastery he founded at Emathia near Ephesos: *Autobiographia* I, §57; II, §45–8; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 21, 24. He attributed the problems which befell him to the 'malice' (*φθόνος*, *βασκάνια*) of others: *Autobiographia* II, §16, §18; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 31–7. On this point, as on others, Akrop. shows his knowledge of Blem.'s ideas and attitudes. For this see the Introduction, 47–50. 'The prominent people' may be a reference to the incident which involved Marchesina (see §52.19): Blem., *Autobiographia*, §71–2. For Blem. see also below, §87.3.

[9] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §67 (p. 34) for a reference to Theodore as his student. See Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 81, n. 119, and 21 for the suggested

date of 1240–1 for his tutoring of Theodore. The student–teacher relationship is apparent in their correspondence as is the high regard in which Theodore held Blem.: *Epistulae*, 1–66; 290–319. Akrop.'s mention of Blem. 'also' as a teacher of the emperor Theodore (διδάσκαλον καὶ αὐτὸν) is an indirect reference to Akrop.'s own role in teaching Theodore. See also §63.

[10] Akrop. is consistent with Blem.'s account of the election on this point: he was not keen to be patriarch, for he 'dreaded the passion with which the Emperor accomplished anything he wanted, his youth, his quick temper and his stubbornness': *Autobiographia* I, §74–80 (pp 37–40); Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 86.

[11] Akrop.'s explanation for the emperor Theodore's turning to others 'after he had made a small attempt' is consistent with what he says elsewhere (§42): emperors prefer uneducated men as patriarchs because they conform more easily to their wishes. On this claim, see the Introduction, 49. For the education of Nicaean patriarchs, see §42.12. However, Blem. insists that the emperor Theodore pressed him to take up the position: *Autobiographia* I, §77, §80.

[12] Akrop., Blem., and Greg. (I, 55.10–13) imply that there was really only one serious candidate—Blem.—while Skout. (510.1–25) and the Logos for Arsenios (457.237–458.272) claim that there were several—three or four—from whom Arsenios was chosen by random readings from Scripture. See the Introduction, 69 n. 420.

[13] Akrop. presents Arsenios as an obscure figure. For Arsenios' surname of Autoreianos, see Pach. I, 95.17–18 and Skout. (510–11) who supplies his surname and gives another version of his life; also the Logos for Arsenios (406–61), discussed in Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period', 73–9. For Lake Apollonias in Bithynia, see Janin, *Les églises*, 139 and map 130; C. Mango, 'The monastery of St Constantine on Lake Apolyont', *DOP* 33 (1979), 329–33. For Arsenios' level of education, see also §84.

[14] The Logos for Arsenios (459.289–92) names two men sent to fetch Arsenios, Taranes and Karyanites. The latter is probably the *protovestiarites* Karyanites known from Akrop. §60, §77.

[15] Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §74 (p. 37.13–17), and Pach. (I, 163.28–165.4) likewise refer to the emperor Theodore's desire to leave Nicaea as quickly as possible. In view of this, the date given for Arsenios' elevation to the patriarchal throne, 'late November 1254' (Laurent, 'La chronologie des patriarches', 139–40), seems very late. There is, however, no evidence to date this event precisely. Sources vary on the length of time taken to raise Arsenios to the patriarchate. Blem. and Pach. give three days, while Skout. (512.1–2) claims it was one week. The uncanonical nature of Arsenios' elevation was

later maintained by Nikephoros of Ephesos, providing the emperor Michael with an excuse for the election of another patriarch: Pach. I, 163.27–8.

54. His reason for hastening his departure from Nicaea was this. The Bulgarian ruler Michael, who was a brother of the emperor Theodore's wife, born to Theodore's father-in-law, John Asan, by the daughter of Theodore Angelos,[1] learned of the emperor John's death, and since he saw the western parts stripped of Roman armies, he determined to restore to Bulgarian rule once again the territory taken by the emperor John from Bulgarians, and the cities in it, for this had long been a cause of anguish to the Bulgarians. Finding the time opportune, as he thought, he set out from the Haimos, crossed the Hebros, and in not much time brought under him a large territory, and with no effort, brought to his side many towns. For the inhabitants, being Bulgarians, sided with those of the same race, shaking off the yoke of those who spoke another language. Since the towns were left only with the Roman garrisons, which were incapable of putting up a fight in such circumstances, they were easy for the Bulgarians to take; some, shaken by panic, surrendered the towns and obtained the freedom to return home; others, because of the suddenness of the Bulgarian attack, did not have time to think of a way to profit and so fled, leaving the places without guards; still others perhaps grew weary with time, since the length of their watch had been extended beyond the norm. Most of the towns were uncared for and were also without the necessary weapons. Therefore, Stenimachos, Peristitza, Krytzimos, Tzepaina and all the fortresses in Achridos,[2] except for Mneiakos, were captured immediately; only this was kept by the Romans. Oustra, Perperakion, Kryvous, and the one fortress which lies next to the city of Hadrian and is called Ephraim, were conquered by the Bulgarians.[3]

When these things had happened and Roman affairs in the west were in confusion, the report spread as far as the emperor, and gave the expectation and[4] the appearance of more danger than was at hand; those at court were not a little disturbed. For they knew that most of the western parts were inhabited by Bulgarians, rebellious of old against the Romans, recently subdued by the emperor John[5] and not yet inured to the conquest; they always nurture hatred for the Romans.

§54 *In §54–60 Akrop. covers the campaign against the Bulgarians in the Rhodope mountain region and in western Macedonia, the first campaign of Theodore II's reign, from the winter of 1254/5 (§56) to the winter of 1255/6 (§60). Akrop. was present, as he reveals at §59: 'we'. His participation in this campaign explains the space that he devotes to it and the detail with which he describes aspects such as the weather, terrain, movements of armies. In addition,*

Akrop. reveals much about the emperor Theodore's reactions, the thoughts behind his decisions, his character. Other sources for this expedition are Skout. who adds information and gives nuances, and the letters of Theodore II to George Mouzalon in Asia Minor, written while on campaign, as Akrop. reveals at §59. This appears to be Theodore II's first campaign and first journey to the western territories of the empire. He had always remained in Asia Minor when his father led campaigns in the 'western parts': §40.19, §42.10.

[1] Michael II Asan (1246–57), the son of Asan II and his second wife Eirene, was the brother-in-law of the emperor Theodore II since Helen, Theodore II's wife, was a daughter of Asan by his first marriage. If Eirene and Asan II were married by 1237/8 (see §38.1, §43.14), Michael would have been in his teens at the time of Theodore's campaign in the winter of 1254/5 (see §43.14). Theodore II refers to him as the 'whelp' in letters written during the campaign: *Epistulae*, 249.41–2; 282.86–7.

[2] The text has been emended to read *ἐν τῇ Ἀχριδῷ*, a variant in some of the manuscripts supported also by Dragoumis, ''*Ἐπανόρθωσις*', 203. See also above, §43.9, for a similar emendation. Achridos refers to the Rhodope mountains (see §24, §43) but also to the middle and lower Arda region, as Akrop.'s distinction here shows.

[3] Akrop. divides the Bulgarian conquests into two, listing first the towns in the northwest Rhodope, south of the Hebros river (Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 162–73), from east to west, and then those to the southeast, on the northern and southern banks of the Arda river (Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 149–53), from west to east. All these had been taken in 1246 by John III without battle, after negotiation: §44. See Soustal, *Thrakien*, 460–1 (Stenimachos); 393 (Peristitza); 325–6 (Krytzimos); 488–9 (Tzepaina); 365 (Mneiakos); 491–2 (Oustra); 395–6 (Perperakion); 327 (Kryvous); 261 (Ephraim). The exact location of Kryvous and Mneiakos is unknown. Michael Asan's donation of land to the monastery at Bačkovo, near Stenimachos, may date to the time of his reconquest of this territory: see Vera, 'Dva nadpisa ot Asenevtsi Batoshavskiiat i Brachanskiiat', 114–17.

[4] The *καὶ* supplied by ms. G has been adopted.

[5] In 1246.

55. For this reason the emperor also was distressed at events, lest he experience misfortune in this way at the start of his reign. He therefore gathered together those in office and those appointed as generals, among whom were Manuel and Michael, his uncles on the side of his grandfather, the emperor Theodore, and he deliberated on what could be done with respect to the events. Most of them said that it was necessary for the emperor to cross the

Hellespont and stem the Bulgarian offensive. This did not please the forementioned uncles of the ruler, and the emperor paid more attention to them for many reasons. The legitimacy of their family compelled him and their advanced age constrained him, while, in addition, the fact that they had become experienced in many things persuaded him no less. For, having become fugitives at the time of the emperor John's accession, they spoke with many masters and wandered about various places so that, after the fashion of poetry, 'they saw cities and learned minds'.[1] But although they were truly knowledgeable, they did not think straight about Roman affairs, their reason being that they had been slighted, first by their brother, the emperor (for neither of them had been raised to a dignity befitting the brothers of an emperor) then also by their relation-in-law[2] the emperor. They had become fugitives from the empire of the Romans and felt ill-will towards them [the Romans].[3] Some might allege that these were excuses, while in truth it was the unstable and unsteady nature of humankind that made them the way they were. This did not escape the notice even of the emperor, but he used them for advice for the present, out of necessity, and because he had no one better with whom to take counsel.[4] At all events, they suggested that it was not necessary for the emperor to cross over to the west, both because those regions were in a bad way and ailing almost incurably and because the emperor did not have an army fit for an imperial enterprise; for winter prevented the mustering of the forces. If the emperor were to invade territory and accomplish nothing worthy of his name and fame, this would not only confirm the enemy in possession of the places it had taken, but would also lead to loss of the remaining places and to the considerable advantage of the enemy, as well as no small decrease in Roman interests.[5]

That is what they said, while all others advised the imperial crossing and urged this,[6] lest everything in the west be lost or almost everything fall into enemy hands. At all events, the counsel of the majority prevailed, but especially the emperor's eagerness and the zeal in his heart which was burning to take action.[7] Taking as many men as happened to be with him—an army of moderate size—as well as the people he met along the way and those who were near the road and able to follow with their own weapons and horses, he crossed the Hellespont and reached Adrianople[8] as quickly as he could.

§55 *Akrop. gives an account of the preliminaries to the emperor's crossing to the west. Skout. adds information about Theodore II and his uncles at §55.4, 6, 7.*

[1] *Od.* 1.3: *πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω*. Chon. (226.64–6) uses the Homeric phrase to describe Andronikos Komnenos, who, in seeking to escape 'the grasp' of his cousin the emperor Manuel, chose 'life exile'.

[2] The Greek word, *gambros*, refers to an 'in-law' by marriage to any female relative: see at §79.4. John III was a *gambros* to Manuel and Michael Laskaris by marriage to their niece.

[3] Michael and Manuel Laskaris, two of Theodore I's six brothers (see §22), play a large role in the army in Theodore II's reign (see §59, §60, §66) and under Michael VIII (Pach. I, 273.19–21; II, 401.18–20, 413.8–11). Their exile, in the reign of John III, to which Akrop. refers, may have been connected with the plot against the emperor John in which two other brothers of the emperor Theodore, the *sebastokratores* Isaac and Alexios, were involved (see §22). Unlike them, Michael and Manuel appear not to have held a high dignity under their brother Theodore—'they had been slighted'. Pach. (I, 91.21–3; 107.13) calls these brothers of Theodore I 'the Laskarioi from Tzamandos'. It seems that the brothers were known by this name because they lived in Tzamandos, in Cappadocia, probably during the reign of John III. However, Pach. also distinguishes between the two, in other passages, referring to Manuel only as 'Tzamandouros' (I, 113.20–1, 153.20–1). It is to be wondered, therefore, whether it was not Manuel only who was associated with Tzamandos, while Michael is to be identified with the Michael Laskaris at Thessalonike who, with others, plotted to turn the city over to the emperor John III: see §45; also §66. Akrop. shows hostility towards the brothers, especially Manuel Laskaris, here and at §60, §66. See the Introduction, 40, for his attitude.

[4] Skout. (513.23–7) is more positive than Akrop. about the emperor's reasons for listening to their advice: they were *oikeioi* by blood and he wished to honour them.

[5] Heis. ('Corrigenda et addenda', in *Opera* I) suggests that the passage from 'If the emperor were to invade' to this point in the text is direct speech, while I have interpreted these words as reported speech.

[6] Among those who urged the crossing was the emperor's 'beloved Mouzalon', his *megas domestikos*: Skout. (514.3–5=*Additamenta*, p. 291, no. 36). For Mouzalon, see §59.

[7] Skout. adds (514.6–12=*Additamenta*, pp 291–2, no. 37) that another reason for the emperor's wish to take the offensive was a dream he saw in which St Tryphon encouraged him. St Tryphon, martyred at Nicaea (1 February), was a favourite saint of Theodore. He built a church dedicated to him at Nicaea and established a school in it: Skout. 512.3–11=*Additamenta*, p. 291, no. 35. That Theodore attributed special significance to the saint's role in the campaign can be seen also from the emperor's reference to Tryphon's help in a letter written to Mouzalon during the campaign. See *Epistulae*, 246.1–3. Coins with the standing figure of St

Tryphon on the obverse date to the time of this campaign, 1255/6: Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 516.

[8] Adrianople is the emperor's base for this early phase of the campaign. See also §56, §58. It was in Nicaean control from 1246: see §44: 'the boundary was the Hebros river'.

56. He stayed in this city for one day only, marching out the next day. One of the Bulgarian spies, seeing the emperor coming from the city of Hadrian, went at full speed to the Bulgarian ruler who was encamped near the Hebros. He made the deed quite clear and reported the emperor's speedy advance against him and gave assurance with oaths that he had really and truly seen with his eyes the emperor crossing the bridge over the Hebros river near the city. This agitated those who were in the company of the Bulgarian ruler; however, they did not withdraw from the place where they were assigned to encamp, but waited there until they might determine the accuracy and reliability of the report. But the campsite of the Bulgarian ruler did not escape the emperor's notice; he learned the place where the army was. Then he travelled more quickly and lengthened his horses' gait, and hoped to encounter the Bulgarian army. Although he had this motive, he was, luckily, frustrated in his purpose by chance. For those who were in advance of the Roman army fell on the men who had been posted to guard the Bulgarian encampment and put many to the sword, took others captive, including the one who had the command of the army. The rest fled in deepest darkness to the Bulgarian army and told the whole story and asserted that the emperor was already close to them. So every last Bulgarian, their leader included, mounted his horse and made for the interior of the Bulgarian lands as best he could. Their faces were cut by the thick tangle of the branches of the trees to which they were exposed; the Bulgarian ruler himself suffered this. Some of them even rode bareback. Escaping in this manner, they avoided the Roman sword.

In the morning, when the emperor reached the place and saw it was without a Bulgarian army, he was distressed, but there was nothing he could do. But when he had taken counsel, he made for Beroe, and upon his arrival there took the fortress without a fight; for its entire wall was in ruins and provided many means of escape. This too had been struck down by the Bulgarians together with the other Roman towns, even though its inhabitants had determined to fortify it with poles and planks from wagons. In any case, the troops, both they and their horses, were well-off for provisions,[1] for the town was full of victuals. Perhaps the emperor would have proceeded and would have attacked the area around the Haimos itself and the fortresses which are on it (for he instilled no small fear in the Bulgarians) if a most severe storm had not suddenly struck, hindering him from setting forth.

A great deal of snow covered the face of the earth and it did not seem good to his advisers for the Roman army to remain on foreign, enemy territory. The emperor therefore stayed there six days; since there was nothing else he could do, having plundered everything in Beroe—men, women, children, sheep, oxen, and anything else able to move—he returned to the city of Hadrian.

§56 *Akrop. (with Skout. 514.16–515.16) and Theodore II's letters to Mouzalon (*Epistulae, *244–6, 246–7) are the only source for these events. The emperor left Adrianople, crossing the Hebros in the direction of the Bulgarian encampment. However, the position of the latter is not specified, apart from 'near the Hebros'. Theodore II, frustrated by the Bulgarians' flight, turns to Beroe. In this passage Akrop. gives evidence of Theodore II's speedy progress, which he comments on elsewhere also (§58). The passage contains an illustration of Akrop.'s interest in physical details, in his portrayal of the enemy's faces cut by the tree branches as they fled in the night. For this, see the Introduction, 47.*

[1] Beroe (modern Stara Zagora), 120 km northwest of Adrianople, in the plain at the foot of the Haimos mountains, was the site of battles in the reign of Isaac II (§12). It is mentioned in John II Asan's possession after the battle at Klokotnitza (1230) and appears to have remained in Bulgarian hands after 1246, as it is north of the Hebros river which was fixed as the boundary at that time: see §44. Although the emperor Theodore II took Beroe on this occasion, in the terms of the treaty made in 1256, Beroe was outside the boundaries of the Nicaean possessions: see §62.3. The great abundance of provisions which Beroe had to offer was also commented on by Vill. (§445): 'et la trova garnie de blez et de viandes'. On Beroe, see Soustal, *Thrakien*, 203–5.

57. He selected an adequate army from there and sent it to the fortresses in Achridos[1] recently taken by the Bulgarians, in the hope that they might again be subjected to Roman rule. When the leaders of the Romans arrived there with their troops they easily took the fortresses with machines and siege towers. For the Bulgarians quickly give up their garrisons in towns if they see the enemy and become involved in serious hostilities.[2] So it was not long before most of these fortresses were conquered. But also, gathering the army that was with him, the emperor left for the towns in the Rhodope, and took Peristitza with engines of war and, after it, Stenimachos and in addition to these, Krytzimos;[3] all these are very strong towns which lie facing the Rhodope mountains and guard everything behind them. He arrived at Tzepaina[4] at the height of winter, but the roughness of the terrain and the cold weather did not allow him to stay in it even for a short time. Therefore, when spring shone forth[5] he sent orders to Alexios Strategopoulos[6] and Constantine Tornikes—whom the emperor John had honoured as *megas*

primmikerios[7]—who were in Serres and had an army encamped there,[8] that they assemble the entire army and come to Tzepaina. They did this, but they proved bad generals in the undertaking; for although they encountered neither enemy with armies nor men capable of fighting them, but heard clashes only and bangs and listened to the sounds of horns, they fled in a disorderly fashion, leaving behind all their baggage and most of their horses to the Bulgarian shepherds and swineherds. Having thus become fugitives, they arrived again at Serres, stripped of horses and arms. The emperor was beside himself with anger at this and, in a fit of rage, ordered those same men to return to the same battle just as they were.[9] But they were unable to do this.

§57 *The events related in this section are also recounted in two letters of Theodore to George Mouzalon: see §57.3, 9. Alexios Strategopoulos and Constantine Tornikes are mentioned together here and later in the narrative (§75, §82, §89) but also in Pach.'s list of great families at Nicaea (I, 91.24–93.6). Both men fared badly under Theodore II but flourished under Michael VIII: §81; Pach. I, 41.15–19; 91–3.*

[1] The text has been emended from *τὰ ἐν Ἀχριδῶν φρούρια* (Heis. p. 113.11) to *ἐν Ἀχριδῷ*, as in §54. The 'fortresses in Achridos recently taken by the Bulgarians' were named above at §54. It is clear from what follows that Akrop. is here making a distinction between Achridos, the region around the Arda, and the Rhodope, to the northwest. See Soustal, *Thrakien*, 160–1.

[2] See the Introduction, 90–1, for Akrop.'s judgements on Bulgarian military ability.

[3] In a letter of Theodore II to Mouzalon written during this campaign, the emperor states that Kryvous and Stenimachos are about to be reconquered: *Epistulae*, 247.3–4. As Kryvous is in the Achridos region, it would appear that the two campaigns, one in the Achridos region, the other further to the northwest, in the Rhodope area, took place at the same time. See §57.1.

[4] See §59 for Tzepaina.

[5] 1255.

[6] Alexios Strategopoulos is mentioned for the first time above (§49) in 1252, when he was sent by the emperor John in an offensive against Michael II. Here he is given a command together with Constantine Tornikes. From this point on Akrop. will refer to the two men together. The men are also mentioned in close proximity to each other in Pach.'s narrative (I, 93.1–15; 107.23–8) as members of the most prominent families in the empire.

[7] The son of Demetrios Tornikes, who was administrator of public affairs under John III, was given the title of *megas primmikerios* by the same emperor (Pach. I, 91.24–5). See above, §49, for the Tornikes family. On *megas primmikerios*, see Guilland, *Recherches* I, 300–32. For Constantine, promoted to

sebastokrator under Michael VIII, see also §75, §84, §85, §89; Schmalzbauer, 'Die Tornikioi in der Palaiologenzeit', 117–19.

[8] Serres had gone over to the emperor John III in 1246: see above, §43.

[9] A letter of Theodore II to Mouzalon corroborates Akrop.'s report on the behaviour of Strategopoulos and Tornikes and the emperor's reaction: *Epistulae*, 251–5. Theodore complains that the disobedience of the 'lawless Strategopoulos' and the 'badly named Tornikes' caused the army to desert, leaving territory open to Bulgarian attack (252.56–253.63). He described Tornikes as 'frightened at every sound' (254.110). Serres is mentioned as the town to which they fled (252.52). The letter also confirms Akrop.'s statement that the men were ordered to return to battle: 'we return the flute to the mouth for a repetition of the earlier tune' (254.122–255.1). A later reference to the fate of Strategopoulos and Tornikes in the reign of Theodore II (§75) shows that they lost favour, possibly because of this campaign. They were, however, restored under Michael VIII: §81, §82.

58. When these things had occurred in this way, something else more serious happened[1] which threatened to cause much damage to the Romans. The man who was leader of the Melenikon army, Dragotas by name, nurtured ill will against Romans by nature, as a Bulgarian, but bore still more than the natural ill will because of his enmity for the emperor. For he had hoped to obtain great things from him; he did not consider what he had received from the emperor John to be worthy—although it was a great deal—and so he plotted open rebellion.[2] He gathered all the soldiers in Melenikon and others, and a great many besides from the surrounding area, stationed himself by the town of Melenikon, and besieged it and was eager to plunder it. In this town, at the head of those guarding it, were posted Theodore Nestongos[3] and John Angelos,[4] both capable of guarding towns and turning enemies away. There was nothing to constrain the people inside the town—for they were well-stocked with provisions—except the shortage of water, the thing which is most necessary and most in demand in summer. But they—for they were not completely without water—fought the enemy resolutely and withstood, shooting arrows, injuring with stones and fighting with all other kinds of weapons.

When the emperor heard about this he took the news badly but, after he had settled on the best plan, he assembled the entire army[5] as quickly as he could and reached Serres in 12 days, having made a long journey in a short time and led a sizeable army accustomed to fight in close combat, fully armed and provided with pack horses, and equipped with, and protected by, all sorts of other baggage. When he had got as far as Serres,[6] he spent the night there, drawing up the army at once in the morning and ordering the infantry and

archers to take the lead. He had learned that the rough terrain of Roupel, along which the Strymon flows and which is hemmed in by two mountains so that a wagon can barely get through, while the river makes the passageway even narrower (the ordinary people call such places 'defiles')[7] was guarded by a Bulgarian army of few horsemen but many foot-soldiers. The Bulgarians also constructed gates in these defiles, secured by levers and bars, so that they were impregnable because of the difficult nature of the terrain, the measures they had taken, and the remaining fortification. When the emperor learned that this was the case he went to the area with speed and found things there just as he had expected. He therefore detached from the troops an infantry contingent of reasonable size, ordering it to march on the mountain above the Bulgarians, so that they might strike from above the Bulgarians who were low down. They did what they were ordered to do quickly; the mountain was overgrown with trees but was passable to the infantrymen. The emperor ordered the cavalry to join battle directly in front of the gates.

When the Bulgarians saw them shooting arrows from the mountains above and in control of a close battle directly in front of them, and realized that they were in great difficulties, they turned to flight and the emperor's army followed them. Many men were put to the sword there; others escaped to the Bulgarian army and brought them the news of the emperor's actions and all they had suffered. They were thrown into confusion by the sudden report, and since the terrible news hit them unexpectedly, each man found a horse wherever he could and hastened to flee, barely mounted. As the night of their flight was moonless, the terrain irregular, and the road difficult to see, some men fell from their horses and others trampled them and killed them; others again were hurled from their saddles, as from a sling, over precipices. Others came to an unhappy end in a different way, so that few of them lived to reach the territory of the Bulgarians. It was on that occasion that their leader Dragotas, also their leader in treachery, had his whole body crushed under the horses' feet, breathing his last three days later.[8] The emperor, reaching the town that night, spoke with the men there who were guarding it, and they welcomed the monarch gladly, fêting him with applause and honouring him with words of praise and naming him 'swift eagle'.[9]

§58 *The rebellion of the inhabitants of Melnik, under the direction of Dragotas, causes the emperor to go to Melnik via Serres. In this passage, Akrop. gives more evidence of Theodore II's speed and military skill and of his own descriptive abilities. Other sources for the events related here are Theodore's letter to Mouzalon (*Epistulae, *251–5) and his later victory newsletter to the east (*Epistulae, *279–82), as well as a fourteenth-century miracle account by Theodore Pediasimos (see §58.6).*

[1] The letter of Theodore II to Mouzalon discussed in §57.9 ends with a reference to the impending battle at Melenikon: *Epistulae*, 255.124–30.

[2] Dragotas was last mentioned as a military commander at Serres who surrendered the town to the emperor John in 1246 and was instrumental in persuading the people of Melnik to surrender to the emperor also: §43–4. From Akrop.'s account here, it appears that as a reward Dragotas had been given a position of authority in the army at Melnik. He had also been given a gold-embroidered garment and gold coins, as well as property. See above §43.19.

[3] Theodore Nestongos is known only from this passage. The Nestongos family was prominent in the thirteenth century. Akrop. mentions Andronikos and Isaac Nestongos, first cousins of the emperor John and leaders of a conspiracy against him at the beginning of his reign: §23. A different Isaac Nestongos was *epi tes trapezes* under Theodore II: §68, §72. George Nestongos, a cousin of Michael Palaiologos, is said to have been so dear to the emperor Theodore II that he would have made him his son-in-law had he lived long enough: Pach. I, 93.12; 95.1–12; 107.12–14. On the family, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 150–2.

[4] A John Angelos is mentioned in four passages of the *History*: (1) at §51: father of Eudokia, Michael VIII's mother-in-law; (2) in this passage, a commander at Melnik in 1255; (3) at §60: the *megas primmikerios*, promoted to *protostrator* along with four other men, in 1255; (4) §77: the *protostrator* John Angelos who commits suicide when Michael VIII has him arrested. While it is clear that (3) and (4) are the same man, it is difficult to see how (2), the commander at Melnik, can be identified with (3) and (4). In this passage he is described as 'capable of guarding towns and turning enemies away', whereas at §60 and §77 Akrop. is scathing of John Angelos' abilities. Furthermore, in this passage Angelos is in the company of Nestongos who comes from a prominent family related to Michael Palaiologos, whereas the five men promoted and loved by Theodore II (§77) were not from noble families. For this last point, see the Introduction, 24–8. The problem of the Melnik commander's identity must remain unresolved. See Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 142, who makes of these four mentions one man.

[5] From Akrop.'s narrative, it cannot be ascertained where the emperor's encampment was. He was last mentioned in Tzepaina, unable to remain there (§57). However, in his letter to Mouzalon, Theodore II indicates that he is on his way to Melnik by way of Philippopolis: *Epistulae*, 255.124–7.

[6] In an account of the miracles of the saints Theodore Tiro and Stratelates, Theodore Pediasimos relates how the emperor Theodore prayed at the church dedicated to these saints at Serres and subsequently enjoyed success at Melnik.

In thanksgiving, the emperor asked 'one of the learned men in his company' to compose a hymn in honour of the saints and he gave silver and gold to decorate icons of the saints: Treu, 'Theodori Pediasimi eiusque amicorum quae exstant', 21.17–22.21; Dölger, 'Zwei byzantinische Reiterheroen erobern die Festung Melnik', 299–305.

[7] The Roupel or Ropel defile (modern Kleidi), between Serres and Melnik, parallel to the Strymon, is about 4 km from the Bulgarian border. The name Roupel, from рупа, Slavic dialect for 'mountain ravine', is the equivalent of κλειδί, the Greek for a narrow pass: see *Rechnik na sŭvremenniia bŭlgarski knizhoven czik*, ed. S. Romanski, III (Sofia, 1959); Demetrakos, *Μέγα Λεξικόν*, V, s.v. κλειδί. The Roupel pass was the site of the final defeat of the Bulgarians by Basil II in 1014: Skyl. 348.14–17; Runciman, *First Bulgarian Empire*, 240–2 and map.

[8] Dragotas' death is mentioned by the emperor Theodore in his victory newsletter to the east. He refers to him as the 'dog': *Epistulae*, 282.86.

[9] Akrop. has commented consistently on the emperor's swiftness throughout the campaign: §56, §58, §59, §61. Theodore II also refers to his speed in his letter to Mouzalon: *Epistulae*, 252.54.

59. When the emperor had managed affairs there as was equitable, exiling from the town the wives and children of the men who had been faithless and ordering that all their property be confiscated, he left Melenikon and arrived at Thessalonike; from there he crossed the Vardar,[1] passed by Vodena[2] and encamped in that area for a short time. He was ill with dysentery;[3] this became epidemic among the troops there. He therefore stayed there a short time, long enough for the illness to break, and then set out for Prilep. Then he prepared suitably and, taking engines of war with him and transporting siege towers on wagons, he left for Veles[4] to besiege it and deliver it from the enemy's hands. But they were thunder-struck at the mere approach of the emperor and did not even wait for the siege engines to be set up, but came to an agreement according to which they would suffer nothing terrible but would come out of the town with their weapons and belongings. Having received sworn assurances from the emperor, they came out of the fortress. But when the emperor saw them to be many in number—for they numbered 500[5]—large in body and fair in appearance, he had regrets about the deed, should he allow so many men of such quality go over to the enemy and become adversaries of the Romans. So he compelled them under oath, and released them, giving them freedom.

From there, then, he set off with the entire army, making the journey through Neustapolis.[6] The place is without water or habitation and is difficult

of passage for a large number of troops. The army went without bread for no moderate number of days and most of the horses were without a drop of water for two days. Then, passing by the town of Stroummitza[7] and marching through the outskirts of Melenikon, we came again to Serres.[8] There the monarch received letters from the eastern parts, sent to him by his beloved Mouzalon,[9] reporting that Muslim affairs were in a state of agitation because of the Tatars.[10] He hurried on the road and made the daily marches[11] longer. But when he reached the Hebros, which the common people call the Maritza,[12] and learned that affairs in the east were not as he thought, he slackened the pace and marched in a more leisurely fashion, making the usual imperial stations. Deviating from the direct road to the east, he went to Didymoteichon,[13] and from there to the city of Hadrian.

None of the fortresses and towns occupied by the Bulgarians had been left, for the emperor had taken all—except two. One of these, a very small fortress which lies in the Achridos mountains and is called Patmos, Alexios Doukas Philanthropenos took very easily, having been left by the emperor to guard the fortresses in Achridos.[14] The other town, called Tzepaina,[15] is very strong and is situated at the juncture of the two great mountains, the Haimos[16] and the Rhodope, between which the Hebros river flows. The monarch was indignant that he had not conquered these fortresses as he had the others; as they were still outside his control, they appeared stronger. But it was over Tzepaina that he was most distressed. He was in a hurry to advance against the town and make an attempt on it with all the strength he had. The summer season had already passed, and autumn too was nearly over, but he did not pay any attention to the weather, nor did he make provision for the bitterness of winter, for he was thinking about one thing only, fulfilling his own wish. Moving the entire army from the city of Hadrian, he gave orders for numerous wagons to be collected from all over the land of the Macedonians, some for the transport of engines and siege towers, others for the conveyance of the provisions for the army, and he ordered the mustering of a host of innumerable foot-soldiers, archers and mace-bearers.[17] When he had prepared everything well and to his liking, he left the city of Hadrian for Tzepaina.

The army passed four stations[18] and at a place they call Makrolivada—those who first saw it gave it a name true to its shape[19]—a severe storm struck them. The storm began in the evening and the cold and the wind became more intense during the night and covered the surface of the earth with a great deal of snow. In the morning it caused the emperor a great deal of trouble, for the place was uninhabited, the enemy was nearby, and the anticipated scarcity of provisions oppressed his spirit no less. This [the scarcity of provisions] was indeed the most serious problem for the army. He was so worried that he assembled the generals of the army, not only those of the Romans but also

those of the Latin and Scythian nations,[20] and asked them what should be done. Nearly all of them advised a return to the city of Hadrian. The emperor did not dismiss their counsel but said to them, 'You have given good advice, saying what you considered best and most expedient. If I, with the help of God, should have something else in mind, would you not accept this as a statement from a sensible master and one who looks after you as he should?' They all replied, 'Whatever your Majesty thinks fit we will consider desirable and welcome.' Then the emperor let them all go to their tents to take food because of the cold weather, while he went to his own quarters and deliberated with those in his company about what should be done. Some wished to put into practice what the men outside had advised;[21] others, who decided that what the emperor had in mind was better, said the opposite. They said,

> The road back to the city of Hadrian is as long as the one which lies
> before us to the town of Stenimachos, and we have sufficient
> provisions to go that far, just as to Stenimachos.
> Should we do the latter we would not appear to the enemy to be making a
> retreat either out of fear of them or because of the harshness of the winter.

This seemed acceptable to the emperor, and since the fierceness of the storm was abating and the snow had stopped falling, he ordered the call to be sounded on the following day. Then, taking the contingents of troops with him, he went to Stenimachos. There he ordered the entire army to stock up with provisions, and left immediately for Tzepaina.

He arrived at a town called Vatkounion,[22] which has the means to provision a large army for a considerable number of days. From there he dispatched his uncle Manuel Laskaris who was a monk with the name Maximos,[23] and the *archon* of his company, Constantine Margarites,[24] to reconnoitre the place and see whether the army would have an easy march to it. They went and scouted out the area surrounding it, reporting back to the emperor that the ascent was easy; Constantine Margarites especially said this, although many of those who knew the terrain disagreed. But the emperor, persuaded by their words, marched up with the entire army. The ascent was steep on all sides and the thick, smooth frost made the entire road difficult to walk on, while the mountain ridge was thickly overgrown with trees. The army kept warm all that night long by lighting fires. The servants[25] of most of them, with their tents, were not able to find their masters. They were weeping almost incessantly, although not tears of sorrow. For the smoke from the fires, trapped by the denseness of the trees and unable to find a way out into the open air, sank below and stung their eyes badly, causing their eyes to water.[26] The emperor also was affected by this. When night had passed and day broke, learning that the town could not be taken by siege, he ordered the army to descend to the

plain. Some men left, but he remained as a guard in the rear with a moderate number of soldiers, and these were the younger men among his attendants. He followed behind on foot, like the rest, for it was not possible to make the descent of the mountain on horseback.[27]

§59 *Akrop. relates the movement of the army in the autumn–winter of 1255. It is at this point that he reveals his presence on the campaign ('we': at §59.8). He shows Theodore's determination, campaigning in winter and in adverse conditions, but he presents this quality as a negative one—'he was thinking about one thing only, fulfilling his own wish'.*

[1] For the Vardar, see H. Grégoire, 'Deux étymologies: Vonditza—Vardar', *B* 22 (1953), 268–9; also §70, §76.

[2] Vodena (Edessa) was taken by the emperor John from Michael II Komnenos Doukas in 1252: §49.

[3] For Akrop.'s interest in the human body and illness, see the Introduction, 46.

[4] Prilep and Veles were ceded to the emperor John by Michael II in 1252 (§49) but Veles appears from this passage to have been taken by the Bulgarians in the meantime, in 1254, along with the Rhodope fortresses.

[5] This figure appears to be Akrop.'s standard number for groups of men who surrender. See the example of Melnik, §44.

[6] Neustapolis (Ovče Polje) in eastern Macedonia, southeast of Skopje: see §44; Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 45 n. 115; 50 fig. 5. The place name appears elsewhere as Eutzapolis, the Greek transliteration of ovčepolje, 'sheep's field'. See Jireček, *Heerstrasse*, 70. Dragoumis, '*Ἐπανόρθωσις*', 208–9, has suggested emending Neustapolis to Eutzapolis, based on Ephraim, 8516 (Bonn edn), and the readings of mss. G and H in Heisenberg's critical apparatus (p. 118.16). However, the Lampsidis edn of Ephraim gives both Eutzapolis and Nautzapolis (8540, 9057). See above also at §44 (Heis. p. 79.21 critical apparatus). See also at §70 (Naxeios–Axios river) where Akrop.'s version of the place name has an initial N.

[7] For Stroummitza (Strumiča, ancient Tiberioupolis), between the Vardar and Strymon rivers, southeast of Štip, see Petit, 'Le monastère de Notre Dame de Pitié en Macédoine', 94–6; Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 64.4–6.

[8] The emperor Theodore's route from Veles to Serres through Neustapolis and Stroummitza bypasses Prosek. This is an indication that Prosek, like Veles, had been taken by Michael Asan in 1254. See Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 45 n. 115.

[9] This is Akrop.'s first mention of George Mouzalon, the emperor Theodore's closest friend. He was from Atramytion and had been raised with Theodore in the palace: Pach. I, 41.8–15; 65.25–30; Greg. I, 62.3–18. At the

time of the Bulgarian campaign he was already *megas domestikos* (Skout. 518.21–3 and §60 below). Because of their special relationship, Theodore called George 'brother', as had the emperor John III Demetrios Tornikes. See §60.5. It is not known if George Mouzalon was related to John Mouzalon, the *mystikos* (§40), or to the Mouzalon who was governor of Nicaea (Blem., *Autobiographia* I, §27–30; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 60 n. 65). For the Mouzalons, who appear in the sources from the eleventh century, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 148–9. On George Mouzalon's social status, see the Introduction, 24–7. Theodore's letters to Mouzalon in Asia Minor are a source for this campaign.

[10] See §61.

[11] Here Akrop. uses the expression ἡμερησίους. . .πορείας which is equivalent to (συνήθεις) . . . σταθμούς, 'the usual . . . stations' below (Heis. p. 119.6–7). A σταθμός or station was a day's journey, also called an ἡμερήσιος δρόμος. Schilbach (*Byzantinische Metrologie*, 36 and n. 7), basing his calculations on a late Byzantine metrical source, determines that a distance of 47 km could normally be covered in a day. Kant. (II, 236.5–6) gives a distance of 80 km (Rentina to Thessalonike) as a day's march.

[12] For χυδαῖος/χυδαῖα, 'common', to refer to the vernacular, see also §1.1, §35, §43.17.

[13] Didymoteichon, along with Adrianople, had fallen to the Bulgarians in 1230 at the time of Theodore Komnenos Doukas' defeat at Klokotnitza (§25). It is to be supposed that both towns became part of the European territories of the emperor John III in 1246, when the Hebros river became the boundary between the Bulgarians and the Nicaean empire (§44). Each became a separate theme: see Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 277. On Didymoteichon, see Soustal, *Thrakien*, 240–4.

[14] Patmos, a fortress in the Achridos region, has not been identified: Soustal, *Thrakien*, 391. For Achridos, the name of the region around the Arda, see §43, §57. Alexios Doukas Philanthropenos is mentioned by Akrop. only here. From this mention it appears that he was *doux* of the theme of Achridos: Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 279, 282. Under Michael VIII, Philanthropenos was *protostrator* and, after the death of Michael Laskaris, *megas doux*: Pach. I, 155.17–18; 273.11–16; 277.17–18; II, 401.17–21; 421.15–16; 429.24–431.3. His grandson, Alexios Philanthropenos, rebelled in Asia Minor in the reign of Andronikos II. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 167–8.

[15] Tzepaina (modern Čepino) eluded the emperor's attempts at conquest twice, early in the campaign (§57) and again at the end. It was difficult of access because of its location in a mountainous region and also because a forest covered the slopes of its acropolis. See the emperor's description of

Tzepaina: *Epistulae*, 281. Also Končev, 'La forteresse *ΤΖΕΠΑΙΝΑ*–Cepina', 285–304; Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 170–3.

[16] Akrop. is referring to the Sredna Gora and the Sarnena Gora, separated from the Rhodope by the Hebros river. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 4 n. 7.

[17] See §63.18.

[18] For a *σταθμός*, see above, §59.11, §61.10.

[19] Makrolivada or 'long meadow', halfway between Adrianople and Stenimachos, is called Uzundžova today, the Turkish equivalent of its Greek name. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 11 and n. 4; Soustal, *Thrakien*, 343.

[20] The 'Latin and Scythian' nations have their own 'generals'. See also §76.9, 10. For the twelfth century, see Haldon, *Warfare, state and society*, 119. For the composition of the Nicaean army, see the Introduction, 97–9.

[21] The Greek contains assonance and alliteration. For Akrop.'s use of figures of speech, see Macrides, 'George Akropolites' Rhetoric', 203–4.

[22] Akrop. calls Vatkounion (Chon. 513.1: Vaktounion), on the northern slopes of the Rhodope to the west of Plovdiv, a town (*πόλις*: §59) and a village (*κώμη*: §60). The rich agricultural plain of the Hebros supplied it with the provisions which Theodore's army plundered: §60. See Jireček, *Heerstrasse*, 37–8; Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 169.

[23] Manuel Laskaris was introduced at §55 but his monastic status is mentioned here for the first time. Pach. (I, 153.20–1) confirms that Manuel was a monk, but he mentions this in the context of relating the appointments Michael VIII made in 1259. If Manuel was already a monk at the time of the campaign described here (1255), it is strange that he was engaged in military activity. He received a dignity, *protosebastos*, in the course of the campaign (§60). Likewise, if Manuel was a monk by 1259, it is difficult to know how he could be the *protosebastos* Manuel Komnenos Laskaris, *gambros* of the emperor, mentioned in a chrysobull of 1259. This man was married to the emperor's niece (*ἀνεψιά*) Maria. See Vranouse, *Βυζαντινὰ Ἔγγραφα* I, no. 14, 129.48–9, no. 28, 252. It seems likely that the emperor's *gambros* is a different Manuel, since Pach. (I, 113) states that Michael Palaiologos put Manuel Laskaris under guard at Prousa in 1258, because he was not supportive of him. For Akrop.'s judgement on Manuel Laskaris, see §60 and the Introduction, 40 and n. 236.

[24] Constantine Margarites is known only from Akrop.'s very unfavourable account. He is described as *archon* of the emperor's company, *allagion* (Heis. p. 122.3), *taxis* (Heis. p. 123.16), words used interchangeably to denote a *tagma*, a regiment of the army: Pach. II, 403.10–11; Angold, *Exile*, 1186 and n. 30; Heisenberg, 'Index nominum' in *Opera* I, p. 341; Guilland, *Recherches* I, 524–5. This is the first mention of the title *archon tou allagiou*, known also from Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 138.34, 163.25–8. On this title, see Bartusis, 'The

megala allagia and the tzaousios', 183–207. Together with Manuel Laskaris, Margarites was put in charge of the army of the theme of Didymoteichon (§60). It appears that the emperor Theodore promoted him to *megas archon* at the time of this appointment, as he promoted Manuel Laskaris to *protosebastos*: see §60. For Akrop.'s dislike of him, see §60.3; see also the Introduction, 40.

[25] The 'servants' may be identical with the *tzouloukones* mentioned at §43.17.

[26] Akrop. gives a description of the physiological effect of smoke which reads literally, 'forcing the eyes to squeeze out tears'. For Akrop.'s interest in physiology and natural phenomena, see the Introduction, 46. For another description of the effect of smoke on the eyes, and on the body in general, see Nikolaos Mesarites' letter to the monks of the Evergetes monastery in Constantinople, written in 1208: ed. A. Heisenberg, 'Neue Quellen', II (1923), 40.19–27.

[27] For Tzepaina's high position, 300–600 metres, see also §57 and §59.15.

60. When he had stayed there for two days and made plunder of the village, Vatkounion, he returned again to the city of Hadrian, and from there to Didymoteichon.[1] On the spot he appointed as commanders Manuel Laskaris whom he named *protosebastos*—an utter simpleton who scarcely knew how to command[2]—and Constantine Margarites, whom the narrative introduced before, a peasant born of peasants, reared on barley and bran and knowing only how to grunt. He was from Neokastra and served in the first ranks in the army of that theme; then he became *tzaousios*. Since he presented to the emperor John the appearance of being a skilful man, capable of serving in the palace, he took him from there and made him *tzaousios* of his own company and then added the '*megas*' to it. The emperor Theodore made him *archon* of his company (this had never happened to anyone before him), and he signed '*megas*'[3] next to his name. These men the emperor left to guard the territory, and not a few other commanders as well. He left with them also an adequate army, ordering them not to pitch battle with the enemy, if the enemy should set out to attack them with Scyths in alliance—rumour had this—and if the enemy should set out to plunder the land, the emperor's men should remain calm, since they had protection from Didymoteichon—the town was strong—and from the Hebros river; for he ordered them to encamp between the two. But if a small army should infiltrate the territory, then they should attack it boldly.

Having prepared all these matters in this way, the emperor crossed the Hellespont and pitched tent at Lampsakos, and there he honoured his men with offices and dignities.[4] George Mouzalon, whom he loved above all

others, who was *megas domestikos*, he honoured as *protosebastos* and *protovestiarios* and *megas stratopedarches*;[5] his brother Andronikos, who was *protovestiarites*, he named *megas domestikos*;[6] John Angelos, who was *megas primmikerios*, he honoured as *protostrator*;[7] pitiful men, worth no more than three obols, brought up in childish pastimes and songs and tunes of cymbals, whom the Homeric phrase, 'false of tongue, nimble of foot, peerless at beating the floor in dance'[8] fits perfectly. Karyanites he made *protovestiarites*.[9] In these childish games I also got caught up, unwillingly, by Themis,[10] and under compulsion, as I should not have been,[11] and I appeared together with the players as an unfortunate plaything.[12] For the ruler altered my name also and did not allow Akropolites to be pronounced unaccompanied.[13]

And so it came to pass. But my narrative has related these things in detail in order to clarify later events. The monarch stayed in Lampsakos a short time for these matters, and after celebrating the feasts of Christ, His Birth and the Lights [Epiphany],[14] he reached Nymphaion a very few days later.

§60 *At the end of his first Bulgarian campaign which lasted one year, from December 1254 to December 1255, Theodore II made arrangements to leave troops at Didymoteichon before crossing to Asia Minor. Upon reaching Lampsakos the emperor promoted his closest men. Pach. (I, 41.6–43.3) describes repressive acts against the aristocracy, the blinding of Constantine Strategopoulos and Theodore Philes, in the same context as the promotion of the Mouzalon brothers. The titles Theodore bestowed on his favourites were high in the hierarchy and had previously been given only to the noble families. George Mouzalon received the title of* protovestiarios *which was taken from Alexios Raoul; Andronikos Mouzalon was made* megas domestikos, *a title previously held by Andronikos Palaiologos and his son-in-law, Nikephoros Tarchaneiotes. See Puech,* L'Aristocratie et le pouvoir à Byzance au XIII^e^ siècle, *374–6. On the significance of Akrop.'s protestations at being involved in these promotions, see the Introduction, 24–8.*

1 It is to be surmised that Didymoteichon became a 'Nicaean' possession in 1246, along with Stenimachos (§44). Akrop. last mentions it in 1230 (§25), when Asan acquired it after the defeat of Theodore Komnenos Doukas.

2 Akrop. is critical in §59 of Manuel Laskaris' and Margarites' failure to give a proper assessment of the terrain. Yet here he narrates how, soon after this incident, the emperor Theodore gave the men titles and made them head of the army of the theme of Didymoteichon. Their elevation in position makes a nonsense of their incompetence. Akrop. is interested in showing the emperor's bad military sense in appointing them in the first place and in giving them titles after their bad performance. See the Introduction, 40, for Akrop.'s attitude towards these men.

[3] Akrop.'s contempt for Constantine Margarites is expressed in terms of his geographical (Anatolian, Neokastra theme) and social origins, 'a peasant born of peasants'. He was one of Theodore II's preferred men. See the Introduction, 88 and n. 569, for a discussion of the importance of Anatolian origin for Theodore II. Margarites was taken from his position in the theme army by the emperor John III and made *tzaousios* of the emperor's company, and then *megas tzaousios*. He is the first known *tzaousios*. Theodore II made him *archon* of his company (*taxis*) and then promoted him to *megas archon*. It is difficult to distinguish between the functions of the *tzaousios* of the emperor's company and the *archon* of the company. As one and the other he commanded the emperor's retinue. See Guilland, *Recherches* I, 596–8; Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 54–5; Bartusis, 'The megala allagia and the tzaousios', 199–207. Akrop. comments that no one had ever been *archon* of the emperor's company before. For Margarites, see also §59.24, §61.

[4] For Lampsakos, see above, §23.8; Introduction, 100.

[5] The emperor joined George Mouzalon at Lampsakos, having left him behind in the east: Skout. 514.14; 518.21–4; see above, §59.9. His affection for George is evident in his letters to him where he calls him 'brother' and 'son' (*Epistulae*, 232.30; 238.8; 256.44–5; 262.14–15; 263.19) and from the great number of honours he bestowed on him, a source of envy to Theodore's well-born subjects (Pach. I, 65.7–9). It can be surmised that Mouzalon had already received the title of *megas domestikos* from Theodore before he set out on the campaign. On *megas domestikos*, see §49.8. In Mouzalon's case the title does not appear to have had a military command attached to it. The very high regard in which Theodore held George can be seen from the combination of titles, *protosebastos* and *protovestiarios*, he bestowed on him, a combination normally associated with kin of the emperor. In the reign of Manuel I, the emperor's nephew received these titles. See Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 196. *Protovestiarios* is the title by which Akrop. (see §63, §75), Pach. (I, 65.7; 79.8, 24) and Greg. (I, 62.17) refer to Mouzalon. Alexios Raoul had held this title until Theodore II took it away from him to bestow it on Mouzalon: see above, §40, §49; Pach. I, 41.8–10. According to Pach. (I, 53.22–6; 43.1–2) Theodore removed dignities from those who held office by virtue of their high birth and bestowed them on those he trusted. Greg. (I, 62.14–16) claims that Mouzalon had excellent judgement and was a good administrator.

The title of *megas stratopedarches* was, according to the lemma of a treatise written by Theodore II, created for Mouzalon (*ἐκ νέου καινουργήσας τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀξίωμα*: *Κοσμικὴ Δήλωσις*, ed. Festa, 97). In the fourteenth century this official was in charge of provisioning the army (Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 174.10–13). It is not clear what military function Mouzalon performed but Pach. mentions measures he took directed against the Latin mercenaries in

the army (I, 79.18–24). See Guilland, *Recherches* I, 502–5; Angold, *Exile*, 186, 252.

[6] Andronikos Mouzalon, the younger brother of George, was given George's first title of *megas domestikos*. See Pach. I, 41.12. For the title of *protovestiarites* which first appears in the thirteenth century, see Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 56; above, §15. For a third brother, whose name is not given, see §75.

[7] See §58.4 for a discussion of the identity of this John Angelos. See also §77.8.

[8] *Il.* 24.261. Akrop. cites the passage exactly. See at §75.19 also for the citation of the same passage. See the Introduction, 24.

[9] According to the Logos for Arsenios (459.289–93; 430–1), Karyanites was one of two men sent by Theodore II in 1254 to summon Arsenios when he was elected patriarch: see §53.14. This source reinforces the connection between Theodore II and Karyanites who was, according to Akrop., one of the emperor's select men. Theodore refers to him favourably in a letter to Mouzalon (*Epistulae*, 227.8–9). Pach. (I, 89.29–30) also mentions his title of *protovestiarites* but, unlike Akrop., he considers Karyanites to be 'worthy' and 'venerable'. See below at §77.7 where Akrop. defames Karyanites. In the twelfth century, a *protokouropalates* and *epi ton kriseon*, John Karyanites is known from the 1166 synod list: ed. Sakkos, 155.10–11. The name could derive from the region of Constantinople known as 'Ta Karianou', near the Blachernai. See Berger, *Untersuchungen zu den Patria Konstantinupoleos*, 476–7. For other members of the family in Asia Minor, see Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 117–18; 161. See the Introduction, 26.

[10] Goddess of Justice. See also §50 for an appeal to this goddess.

[11] The phrase ὡς οὐκ ἐχρῆν (βιασθείς): Heis., p. 124.15–16, is reminiscent of Blem.'s ὡς οὐκ ἔδει (*Autobiographia* II, §8, §44) which Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 98 and n. 16, translates 'as I should not have done' but also as 'completely'. See §60.12 also for the influence of Blem. on Akrop.'s expression.

[12] Blem. uses the same expression, although not the exact wording, in a similar situation: *Autobiographia* II, §77; Introduction, 47–51, for a discussion of Blem.'s influence on Akrop.

[13] Akrop. also received a title but he does not say which. Skout. (522) omits reference to Akrop. in relating this passage but in recounting a later event (525.28–9) he calls Akrop. *megas logothetes*. See the Introduction, 23.

[14] 25 December 1255 and 6 January 1256.

61. He spent the winter there,[1] but when spring shone forth he mustered a large army, ordering not only the enlisted men to follow, but even those who had never been enrolled in the ranks of the army, for he immediately drew up

into military units all those who served the emperors in the game preserves and in the hunting of game, deer and swine, as well as those who hunt with falcons.[2] The assembled group was large and the ruler's command compelled most of the men to bring something more than the usual. In this way, then, he collected the entire army. When he learned from an embassy he had sent that the Persian ruler[3] was not troubled by the Tatars, he straightway left for the west from the east. For, thinking that the Persian ruler had his affairs in order and remained secure, he had no fears at all about his empire in the east.

Having assembled the entire army, which was greater than those his father the emperor and he himself had ever collected to cross the Hellespont, he arrived at Lampsakos, hoping to find the men he had left behind at Didymoteichon safe and sound, in keeping with his orders to them,[4] and to make not a small addition to the army accompanying him. But bad judgement and disobeying the imperial order caused their fall. For when the ruler of the Bulgarians learned that the emperor was far away, he summoned a Scythian army to his alliance and sent them in an offensive against the territories of Macedonia, both for the sake of material profit and to frighten the Romans. They numbered about 4000, as the Scyths who knew said;[5] some said more, others fewer. The Scyths, then, passed by the city of Hadrian and plundered the area around the river whose name is Regina,[6] and looted the villages around Didymoteichon. The forementioned generals of the army which had been left behind at Didymoteichon, disregarding the imperial orders,[7] armed themselves and attacked the Scyths. As is their custom, the Romans are clad in armour which is burdensome, while the Scyths are lightly armed warriors and use bows. Therefore they struck the Romans with arrows from a distance and wounded their horses and easily made the horsemen foot-soldiers and finally turned them to flight. Since Manuel Laskaris had a very swift horse which he called Goldenfoot, he fled to the city of Hadrian, but Constantine Margarites was captured and, with him, many others of those appointed as heads of the army whom the Scyths ransomed to the Bulgarians.

When the emperor learned about this he was distressed, but hurried to reach the area around Boulgarophygon[8] and, increasing his speed, he made faster progress. Since his informers told him that the Scythian army was nearby, he moved the entire army to the place where they had reported that the enemy were prowling about.[9] Yet, although in one day he travelled more stations than there are in 400 stades,[10] he did not encounter them. For they had learned of the emperor's swift advance and ran as quickly as their legs could take them and many of them, the most distinguished of the race, were put to the sword in the region of Bizye.[11] Having failed in this enterprise,[12] the emperor pitched tent at the river which is called Regina, and there assembled the entire army, which was very large.

§61 *Most of the action of this second campaign against the Bulgarians in the spring–summer of 1256 took place around Adrianople, Didymoteichon, and the east of the Hebros, along the Regina river. Skoutariotes gives additional information, the nature of which is so detailed as to indicate his presence. See §61.6, 8, 10; §62.3; §63.1, 22, 25, 26; §66.1; §67.1, 3. He would have been among the churchmen accompanying the emperor for the marriage of Nikephoros and Maria (§64). The presence of the synod with the patriarch in Thessalonike, for the marriage, is confirmed by an act of 1256 (*Actes de Kutlumus, *39.20–1) and a letter of the same date (autumn 1256) by Manuel Disypatos, metropolitan of Thessalonike, to pope Alexander (Pieralli, 'Una lettera del patriarca Arsenios', 178–85; Laurent,* Regestes, *no. 1332, pp 137–9). Skout. makes it clear upon return to the east that he had been travelling with the emperor: 530.18: 'we came to Kalamos'.*

[1] For wintering in Nymphaion, see §41.2, §84.1 and the Introduction, 88.

[2] On game preserves in Byzantium, see N. P. Ševčenko, 'Wild animals in the Byzantine park', *Byzantine garden culture*, ed. A. Littlewood, *et al.* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 69–86.

[3] The 'Persian ruler', mentioned without a name at §53, §64, §65, §69, is Izz al-Din Kaykaus II (1246–61) or 'Azatines' as Greek sources call him. See *EI* IV (1978), 813–15; Cahen, *The Formation of Turkey*, 65–71. See the Introduction, 92. The embassy, which took place in the spring of 1256, is mentioned also by Ibn Bibi, 270.

[4] Theodore II had left Manuel Laskaris and Constantine Margarites in charge of the army at Didymoteichon: §60. Akrop. emphasizes the extraordinary size of the army in this passage, 'greater than those . . . ever collected to cross the Hellespont', and later at Heis. 126.19, 27–8, where he repeats the phrase 'the entire army'.

[5] The informants must have been Cumans in the army of Theodore. For these Cumans, see §40 and §59, §61.9, 12.

[6] The Regina (Ergene), a tributary of the Hebros, branches off to the east into Thrace. See Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 15.

[7] The emperor had ordered them not to leave their encampment which was between Didymoteichon and the Hebros river: §60. Skout. adds the information that in disobeying they went to the area around Adrianople, to a place called Barsanika (Bersinikeia), where they were defeated: 523.21–4=*Additamenta*, no. 40.

[8] Eski Baba, southeast of Adrianople: Jireček, *Heerstrasse*, 100. The emperor was approaching from the east, having originally intended to go to Didymoteichon.

[9] The movements of the emperor's army are unclear from Akrop.'s description. It appears that the emperor, speeding on his way to Boulgarophygon, learned that the Cumans were nearby and changed his direction.

Skout. (523.28–30=*Additamenta*, no. 41, p. 293) adds that the Cumans were heading home, having plundered Rhaidestos, Herakleia and the Bizye area. On Bizye, see §61.11.

[10] The number of 'stations' in 400 stades cannot be calculated. See above §40, §59 for *stathmoi*. According to a late Byzantine source, however, 224 *stadia*=47.225 km (Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, 36). Based on this calculation, the emperor Theodore travelled c. 90 km in one day. This would indeed have earned him his reputation for speed. Cf. M. Reinke, 'Die Reisegeschwindigkeit des deutschen Könighofes im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert nördlich der Alpen', *Blätter für deutsche Landes-Geschichte* 123 (1987), 225–51: Otto III is said to have covered a distance of 48 km in one day. Kant. (II, 236.5–6) gives 80 km as a day's march. See also §59.11.

[11] The sudden reference to Bizye is puzzling. If, however, it is taken together with Skout.'s 'addition' to the text (see at §61.9), the reference makes more sense. Some Cumans were found and killed at Bizye which had been a Nicaean possession since 1247 (§47).

[12] Skout. gives an account which is less negative than Akrop.'s assessment. See the Introduction, 68–9, for differences in their accounts. According to Skout., the emperor gave George Nestongos, the *epi tou kerasmatos*, and Kleopas, a Cuman, a detachment of the army and sent them against the elusive Cumans. They were successful in finding them and killed many at the river (Regina). The prisoners were freed and the Cumans lost all their booty (524.5–11=*Additamenta*, no. 42, p. 293). George Nestongos is known from Pach. (I, 95.1–12; 107.12–16) who refers to his very close ties to the emperor Theodore II and also his blood relationship to Michael VIII. Kleopas the Cuman is mentioned in a letter of Theodore II to Mouzalon, asking the latter to receive 'my dear Cuman Kleopas' and to carry out the emperor's orders concerning him (*Epistulae*, 259.28–43).

62. Since the ruler of the Bulgarians had not been able to accomplish anything against the Romans—the emperor had been present with many troops in the west and had come close to his territory—he turned to negotiation and arranged for his father-in-law, the Russian Ouros, son-in-law of the king of Hungary, to mediate matters concerning peace.[1] First he sent ambassadors to the emperor, preparing the way for the Ouros' coming to him, so that he would have nothing to fear and he would be received honourably by the emperor. This was done and the Ouros went to the emperor. And he was received by the monarch gladly and with the appropriate munificence, both he and those with him,[2] and he concluded the peace treaty, swearing an oath binding him and also his son-in-law, the ruler of the Bulgarians, to release the town of Tzepaina to the emperor (for, of the places the emperor John had

ruled, only this was held by the Bulgarians) and the emperor would have peace with the Bulgarians and each party would be content with its former boundaries.[3] When everything had been arranged in this way, in accordance with the ruler's judgement, the Ouros spoke the words of parting and left, having obtained imperial favours. The collected gifts numbered 20 000 and were of all kinds, horses and woven cloths and other things.[4] The emperor stayed in the region of Regina, waiting for the cession of Tzepaina.[5]

§62 *The negotiations and terms of the treaty concluded at Regina between Theodore II and the Bulgarian ruler are described in Theodore's letter to his subjects in the east (*Epistulae, *279–82) and, more briefly, in a letter of Niketas Karantenos to the abbot of St John's monastery, Patmos, written soon after the terms of the treaty were fulfilled. For this letter see Nystazopoulou, 286–308. Skout. adds some chronological precision to the account. See §62.3. Akrop. was responsible for drawing up the treaty, as he reveals at §63. See the Introduction, 23–4, for his function at this time.*

[1] The mediator of peace, 'the Russian Ouros', called 'the ruler of the Russians' and 'the bear' by Theodore II in his letter to the east (*Epistulae*, 280.40; 281.87–8), is Rostislav Michailović, son-in-law of the Hungarian king Bela IV, and father-in-law of Michael II Asan who married his daughter, Anna. Her name has recently been discovered through a new reading of the inscriptions next to the portraits of Michael II and his wife in the church of the Taxiarchs, Kastoria. See Subotić, 'Portret nepoznate Bugarske tsaritse', 93–102 (Eng. summary, 101–2); Todorova, 'Dashterjata na Rostislav Michajlovich i sabitijata v Bulgarija ot sredata na XIII vek', 52–7; P. Nikov, 'Bulgaro-Ungarski Otnoshenija ot 1257–1277 g.', *SBAN* 11 (1920), 58, 60–1. On Anna see also §73. 'Ouros' is the Greek transliteration of the Hungarian title Ur ('lord'), bestowed on Rostislav by Bela when he gave him Mačva, a region between the Sava and the Drin rivers, over which to rule. See Ostrogorsky, 'Urum-Despotes, Die Anfänge der Despoteswürde in Byzanz', 448–60, esp. 455–6. On Rostislav's mediation, see §63.8; also §73.4.

[2] In his letter to the east, Theodore II says that Rostislav was accompanied by 'prominent people from among the Bulgarians' (*Epistulae*, 280.42–3).

[3] The usual date given for the treaty negotiated at Regina, 'shortly before 6 August 1256' (Dölger-Wirth, *Regesten*, no. 1839c, pp 54–5), is based on the fact that Akrop. relates an incident which took place on the day of the Transfiguration (6 August) directly after discussing the treaty: see §63.2. However, Skout. is more precise (525.1–5). He states that the emperor waited from the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul (29 June) until the end of August for the cession of Tzepaina and the expulsion of the 'barbarians'. Therefore the treaty was signed in June, possibly on the 29th. In his letter to the east

Theodore II claims that he had decided on certain demands to make of the defeated party but the 'appeals' of the 'ruler of the Russians' made him soften and ask for Tzepaina only which he greatly desired because it was a strong fortification and the only fortress he had been unable to reconquer: *Epistulae*, 280.34–47; above, §59; see the eulogy of Tzepaina in Theodore II's letter to the east, *Epistulae*, 281.51–68. In his letter Theodore lists the places which constitute the boundaries of the agreement: Philippopolis in the east, Sofia, Skopje and Albanon to the west. See §44, for the boundaries in the 1246 agreement.

[4] Theodore's letter to the east does not mention the gifts given to Rostislav. These must have been listed in the treaty.

[5] From 29 June until the end of August: see §62.3.

63. At that time something wondrous[1] happened with respect to this matter, which is worthy of remembrance and report. It was a renowned feast day on which we pious people celebrate the Transfiguration of Christ,[2] and since, as was customary, the emperor had to be present for the holy liturgy,[3] the time of the midday meal was delayed. We also dined and, after resting for a short time, arose. The sun was already approaching the western horizon. It was the emperor's habit to ride out around twilight and pass through the entire camp and to go up and survey the whole army—which he used to call a city on the move[4] which guards all the other Roman cities—at its edge, at a level place projecting a little above the plain. He would do this invariably; even if the sun[5] were about to set on the western horizon he would not hesitate to do it. The camp was about 40 stades[6] in dimension, if not more. I did not have good luck on that occasion, friend of the emperor and rash as I was. Having learned that the emperor was on horseback, I got on my mule as quickly as I could and followed him at full speed; I did not observe, as I should have, the untimeliness of the time.[7] Since the emperor was riding a horse he moved faster, but when he saw that I was behind and not able to keep up with him, and assuming that if I fell behind too much I would not continue to follow, he said to me, 'Do not get left behind completely, but come at a leisurely pace.'

He went, then, to his usual place and with him the select men stood around him, and I joined them, following, and we all stood round in a circle. The emperor said, 'Have you learned what was recently reported to us?' And we replied, 'We have not, O emperor.' The emperor said,

> A man who arrived a short time ago reported something unwelcome, that is, that the Russian Ouros[8] deceived us; he came here to profit, faking the mediation of peace and swearing a false oath. Every thing he did was a deception and they say that he has an opportune

> excuse for dissolving the oaths, that the leader of the Bulgarians, his son-in-law, does not accept the peace on these terms. What do you think? Is this true or a statement concocted by a liar?

We replied, 'The report does not seem to be at all true. It is false and unreliable because the Russian Ouros swore the oath not only for himself but also on behalf of his son-in-law the leader of the Bulgarians. How can it be that a man who is a Christian has succumbed to such perjury?' The emperor replied, 'Perhaps the desire for money tempted him to slip into such wickedness and we not only do not have the goodwill of the Bulgarians but, in addition, we have spent so much money for nothing.' We said, 'This has not in any way been proven true, emperor.' The emperor said to me, specifically, 'What do you say about this?' I replied, 'In this matter I am inclined to agree with the others; I think that the report contains more falsehood by far than truth. Even if, as happens in some cases, the Ouros planned to invalidate the oaths, thinking to deceive us, he will have the Divinity hostile to him and we will have Him fighting on our behalf for truth and justice.' We said this and the emperor agreed with what was said and we started to return to our tents. It was already night but since the moon was full, it provided us with light to see.

As the emperor was going he asked again, 'What do you think about the things said?' We replied, 'O emperor, this is false.' But he inquired not once or twice or even three times but many times since he was mean-spirited in such circumstances. And we, having given a response to each question, fell silent. But he asked again. When he saw that the others were silent, turning the discussion back to me, he asked, 'What do you say about this?', he asked, adding my title of office,[9] 'for this subject pertains to you and it is especially your responsibility.' He said this desiring to invent an excuse for anger. I replied,

> Why is it my responsibility? If I had not drawn up the documents well or administered the oaths properly,[10] or had not dealt with him and his companions appropriately, then this would have been my fault and a great failure. But if these duties were carried out suitably and just as they ought to have been, what does what he did to upset the arrangements have to do with me?

But the emperor again asked—I know not for what reason—'What do you say about these matters?' And I replied, 'I have told you many times, O emperor, that the statement seems to be more false than true. Besides, to be accurate about something which is uncertain does not seem to me to be easy.' He replied, 'It is a gift to be able to give a secure and precise opinion on uncertain matters. About the obvious, even asses can speak.'[11] And I said, 'Behold, we have been classed with the asses!' The emperor, full of anger, replied, 'You always were a fool[12] and you still are.' I said nothing more—by my

word[13]—than to reply to his statement, 'Since I am a fool, let me keep silent and let the prudent speak.'

I said this and the emperor, filled with boundless anger and madness, as if in a Bacchic frenzy,[14] moved to draw his sword from its sheath, taking hold of it by the hilt. But he held onto it; he exposed it for a short time and put it back again. He ordered his *megas domestikos*, Andronikos Mouzalon,[15] to take me off my mount. The latter wanted to, but could not; for he had a thin and weak little body. Gently he said, 'Get off your saddle.' I dismounted from the mule. Our emperor who was so good to us, we who had suffered much at the hands of his father for his sake, and who had said in a loud voice more than once, in the midst of a large crowd, 'This man is responsible for many good things which I possess' (he was speaking of his philosophical studies)[16] 'and I am indebted to him for a great deal'—he who had put my name forward on many occasions, calling it delightful both in deed and in name[17]—now ordered two mace-bearers[18] to beat me. He had appointed them a few days ago, a full 24 in number, I know not why, if not on my account, so that the stage of the drama might be given an appearance worthy of a tragedy. They beat me; I took the blows in silence. It maddened him all the more that I was not at all bent and driven to supplication.[19] When I had received many blows all over my body, I said with difficulty, in a weak and calm voice, 'O Christ, my Lord, I have been ill so many times. Why did I not die on any of those occasions? Why have you spared me for such times?' I spoke these words and the emperor, as if ashamed, recovered and said to one of his attendants, 'Take him', and he put me on a horse and asked where he should take me. I replied, 'I will go wherever the emperor wishes.' But again he pressed me, questioning me. Then I replied to him, 'We must go to the Vardariots. This seems to me to be also in your interest.' And so it happened that we went to the tents of the Vardariots.[20] When their *primmikerios*[21] saw me he wondered and asked what I sought in coming to his tent. I said, 'I have come for a little rest.' I stayed there with them for a short time. By then the *primmikerios* had learned about my circumstances. But the emperor did not delay long, sending word that I should return to my tent.[22] Fearing lest, overcome by grief, I might take refuge in flight,[23] he ordered a military detachment to surround my tent and secretly keep watch over me.

When I, however, reached my own tent, I passed the time in it quietly, neither going to the imperial quarters, nor speaking with any of my friends and acquaintances, but devoting myself to books and reading, and taking a meal from time to time. I spent several days in this way, and the emperor was vexed to see the hardness of my resolve. All of August passed and I was not at all able to yield even a little on the opinion which I held. Many of the bishops came to me, I believe at the command of the emperor, even if they

themselves wished this to go unnoticed, saying that they had come to me of their own volition, prompted by friendship and good disposition. They said often that I should abandon my obduracy and be reconciled with the emperor and again assume the yoke of servitude. But I did not find them at all convincing. I said, 'Should the emperor do the best thing possible for me, such as no one of those who has ruled as emperor has ever done for any of the men who have served him, or the worst and most evil things possible to me, things that no one famous for his evil deeds has ever done, neither one way nor the other would I serve the emperor in any way.' I had this resolution and immutable intention.[24]

Since it was the month of September and the wife of the despot Michael, Theodora, came to the emperor with her son Nikephoros in order to complete the marriage ties with the emperor which the father of the emperor, the emperor John, had agreed to some years before,[25] the emperor was hurrying to reach Thessalonike, where he had intended to celebrate the wedding. And so, leaving from the region where he was,[26] he started on the road to Thessalonike. On the way[27] he made an agreement with the despot's wife. Theodora, the despot's wife, agreed, although unwillingly, to the emperor's terms, for she was in his hands, almost as if in prison, and could not do otherwise. Thus she agreed to give the emperor the fortress of Servia and, with it, Dyrrachion also.[28] In addition, oaths were advanced in writing and were sent to the despot Michael. He, in the words of poetry, agreed to the terms sworn, 'willingly but with an unwilling heart',[29] for he wanted his wife and son to be freed and to be by his side.

In the midst of these deliberations the emperor became master of me as well, prizing me from the hardness which I maintained. For he sent his uncle on his grandfather's side, Manuel Laskaris, and his *protovestiarios* George Mouzalon and, using gentle and informal words, the emperor won me over, and his emissaries took me to him.[30] I came before the emperor and, inclining my head, as was my custom, I stood at a distance. The emperor said, 'Do you not know where you are accustomed to stand? You know your place, go to it.' Yielding to the emperor's command, I went and stood by his side, just as was my custom. Then the emperor informed me about the entire case of the despot Michael and related it to me from the beginning, as it developed. These things happened in the area of Langadas;[31] this is a place which is near Thessalonike.

§63 *The event recounted in this section which Akrop. calls 'wondrous' and 'worthy of remembrance and report' reveals something of the emperor Theodore II's anxious and insistent character and more about Akrop.'s attitude towards him. The section is also of central importance in the construction of Akrop.'s*

narrative, occupying a relatively large number of pages and as such constituting by its length as well as its contrasting character portrayals a pendant to Akrop.'s account of Michael Palaiologos' trial for treason. See the Introduction, 59–62. See Skout. (525.6–526.13) for a much shorter version of the incident and a different view of the emperor Theodore.

[1] Akrop.'s use of the word is ironic. The same word—*θαυμάσιον*—is used by Skout. (526.14) to describe a portent which occurred at this time and not what happened between the emperor and Akrop.

[2] The feast of the Transfiguration or Metamorphosis, 6 August (1256).

[3] While the emperor was on campaign, liturgies were celebrated in a tent attached to the imperial tent. A synodal decision, dating to sometime after 1204, refers to the reinstatement of this custom which had been disrupted by the Latin conquest of Constantinople. See Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1302, p. 105, whose reference to the text of the decision is, however, incorrect. For earlier evidence for the inclusion of an 'imperial chapel with sacred furniture' in the baggage for an expedition, see Constantine VII's military treatises (*Three treatises*, ed. Haldon, 106.183).

[4] For the army as a 'city on the move', see Anna Komnene (15.4.9). The square formation used by the Byzantine infantry and by the Franks was compared to 'a walking city' by the fourteenth-century writer, Muhammad b. Mankali: H. Ritter, 'La parure des cavaliers und die Literatur über die ritterlichen Künste', *Der Islam* 18 (1929), 116–52, here 146–7; E. McGeer, *Sowing the dragon's teeth: Byzantine warfare in the tenth century* (Washington, D.C., 1995), 278–9. See, on this, Haldon, *Warfare, state and society*, 156–7.

[5] Akrop. uses the expression 'the bearer of light' (*φωσφόρος*: Heis. 128.7) for the sun.

[6] On 'stades', see §40, §60.

[7] The word-play 'the untimeliness of the time' (*τῆς ὥρας ἄωρον*: Heis. 128.13–14) conveys the bad luck which Akrop. experienced on this occasion.

[8] For the 'Russian Ouros', Rostislav Michailović, son-in-law of king Bela IV of Hungary and father-in-law of Michael Asan, see §62.1.

[9] See Heis., 'Corrigenda' et 'Addenda', for the correction of *ὀφφικίον* to read *ὀφφικίου*. For Akrop.'s title at this time, see discussion above at §60.13.

[10] For the duties of the *megas logothetes*, and for Akrop. as a holder of this title at this time, see §60.13 and the Introduction, 23–4.

[11] Krumbacher, 'Mittelgriechische Sprichwörter', 237, identifies the emperor's statement as a folk expression. Instead of *γαίδαρος* Akrop. gives *ἀείδαρος* for 'ass', a form which derives from an etymology found in glossaries: *γαείδαρος· παρὰ τὸ τὴν γῆν δαίρειν, ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἀεὶ δαιρόμενος*: F. Sturzius, ed., *Etymologicum graecae linguae gudianum* (Leipzig, 1818).

[12] The emperor may be referring to his mother's, the empress Eirene's, use of this word (*μωρός*) to describe Akrop.: §39.9.

[13] *Μά* is used in oaths: see §45 (Heis. 81.27–82.1): 'by your, and our, Demetrios'.

[14] See the discussion in the Introduction, 60, for Akrop.'s characterization of the emperor. Pach. (I, 41.6–8) describes Theodore as 'hot-headed' (*θερμός*), blaming his illness for his behaviour.

[15] For Andronikos Mouzalon, see §60.6.

[16] Akrop. taught Theodore philosophy and logic in the 1240s. See §53.9 and the Introduction, 9–11 and n. 52.

[17] The expression 'in name and in deed' (*πρᾶγμα καὶ ὄνομα*) is one which calls attention to the literal meaning of a name and is a variation of the phrase *ὀνομάζεταί τε καὶ ἔστι* (above §44.5; §19: *φιλόσοφος . . . ὢν καὶ ὀνομαζόμενος*). Akrop. could be referring either to his first name, George, or to his surname, Akropolites, when he says the emperor had in the past called attention to his 'name' (*κλῆσιν*: Heis. 131.8). See Theodore II's letters to Akrop. in which he plays on the meaning of Akrop.'s surname: *Epistulae*, 101.21, 108.43–4: 'acropolis of philosophy and wisdom'; *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 2 (title of work): *εἰς ἄκρον φιλόσοφον*; 180.644: *ἄκρως φιλοσοφεῖν*. For 'George', *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 22.490–82: *Γεώργιε . . . ἐμόν ἐντρύφημα λογικόν, ἐμὸν ὅτι κάλλιστον καὶ πρᾶγμα καί ὄνομα*.

[18] 'Mace-bearers' or *κορυνοφόροι* (Heis. 131.10) are mentioned in §59 along with archers and foot-soldiers who are being mustered in Adrianople before setting out for Tzepaina. Akrop.'s reference to the emperor's appointment of 24 mace-bearers 'a few days ago' could be a reference to this earlier time. See also Chon. 156.30–157.1; Pach. IV, 485.22–30, for the role of mace-bearers in the army.

[19] Heis., 'Corrigenda': *δεήσεις*.

[20] The Vardariots, whose name derives from the Vardar (Axios) river, are known from Ps.-Kod. as a group of imperial servants in the palace whose duty it was to 'keep the people in order' (ed. Verpeaux, 179–82). It is thought that they had become imperial guards already by Manuel I's reign: Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 63. However, the evidence from this passage of Akrop. in no way excludes the possibility that they were part of the field army. Likewise, it cannot be inferred from this passage that 'they were not in the immediate vicinity of the emperor, as a bodyguard, but were encamped separately . . .' (Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 280). The 'tents of the Vardariots' were not necessarily at a distance from the emperor, since Akrop. does not specify where the beating took place. For the ethnic origins of the Vardariots, see Oikonomides, 'Vardariotes', 1–8.

[21] A *primmikerios* of the Vardariots is attested for the first time in Manuel I's reign: *Ekthesis* of the synod of 1166: ed. Sakkos, 142.27–8; Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 182.6; also Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 62.

[22] Skout. (526.7–10) states that the episode the lasted one day only, after which Akrop. was reinstated in his former position of honour: 'He was once again the *megas logothetes,* honoured above the many…' Akrop. gives the impression that the whole affair dragged on. See below, §64.24.

[23] This consideration is perhaps inserted here as an explanation of Michael Palaiologos' flight: see §65.

[24] The attitude which Akrop. expresses here, his hard resolve in the face of imperial pressure, is similar to that of Blem. in a different context. See the Introduction, 50. Akrop. insists that his estrangement from Theodore lasted a whole month ('all of August passed') but see Skout.'s remarks (§64.22). The bishops who came to Akrop. were accompanying the patriarch and the emperor on this expedition because of the marriage which was to be celebrated between Nikephoros and Maria: §63.24; §64.

[25] The betrothal of Nikephoros and Maria, daughter of the emperor Theodore II and his wife Helen, took place in 1248–50: see §49.

[26] The emperor travelled from Regina (see above §61–2) westwards towards Thessalonike: see Asdracha, *Les Rhodopes*, 243–4. Skout. (526.22–3) adds that the emperor set out at the beginning of September, on a Saturday. This could be either 2 or 9 September 1256: Grumel, *Chronologie*, table XVI, 316.

[27] For the place and the date, see §63.31.

[28] The letter of Niketas Karantenos to the abbot of St John's, Patmos, refers also to the cession of 'Dyrrachion and other large *kastra*': ed. Nystazopoulou, 288, 299. Theodore Komnenos Doukas, Michael II's uncle, had held Servia in northern Thessaly, and Dyrrachion (Durres) on the Adriatic, since the 1220s. For Dyrrachion, see §14.12; for Servia, not mentioned before by Akrop., see Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 259–64; Nicol, *Despotate*, 58–9.

[29] *Il.* 4.43.

[30] The reconciliation took place around 14–17 September, on the road to Thessalonike, at Langadas (see §63.31), where the emperor met Theodora and celebrated the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September) (see §63.31). Thus, according to Akrop., the estrangement with Theodore II lasted over a month, from 9 August (see §63.2) to mid-September, while in Skout.'s account (526.10–13), Akrop. was reinstated after one day and honoured by Manuel Laskaris and George Mouzalon before they left Regina for Thessalonike. On Laskaris and Mouzalon, see above §60. See the Introduction, 67–9, for the discrepancy in the accounts of Akrop. and Skout.

[31] Langadas, to the northeast of Thessalonike, is described by Kant. (II, 236.8) as 'not far' from that city. See also *Actes de Chilandar*, ed. L. Petit, *VV*

17 (1910), no. 68, p. 154.1. Skout. (526.27–8), however, gives the name of the place as Lentzas and specifies that they celebrated the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September) and remained there for three days before moving on to Thessalonike.

64. When the emperor arrived in Thessalonike, he completed the marriage of his daughter Maria with the son of the despot Michael, Nikephoros, whom he also made despot.[1]

While the emperor was involved in these affairs, a letter was sent to him by those who were in the area of Bithynia and had been ordered to guard the region, saying that Michael Komnenos Palaiologos who, as the narrative recently mentioned, had been honoured as *megas konostablos*[2] by the emperor John and had been entrusted with the command of this entire place,[3] had fled and gone to the land of the Muslims. The emperor was not a little disturbed by this and, summoning me, he said, 'Do you know what has happened to him?' 'Not at all, O emperor,' I replied, 'What is it that has happened recently?'

'The *megas konostablos* has fled and gone to the Muslims. What do you suppose this signifies? He will not advance against our lands with an army made up of Muslims, will he?'

'I think he would never do such a thing, O emperor. I have observed his disposition and I know him to be a friend of the Romans in his thinking.'

The emperor said, 'Then why did he flee from our lands?'

'Because,' I said, 'as you know, O emperor, not once or twice but many times you threatened him with the most dreadful things and you were severely angry with him and, in the presence of a large number of people, you said that you would send him away and put his eyes out. He learned this, and heard what was said, from many people. His heart was stung and he feared the retribution and hastened to avoid the requital.'[4]

The emperor said, 'But why did he not stay in our lands even if he were to suffer these terrible things, preferring to fare ill among his own people than to fare well in a foreign land?'

I said, 'That is not human nature, O emperor. Some might appear able to suffer terrible things and to embrace misfortune, being of a hard disposition and indifferent, so to speak, to the troubles of life, but I do not think that anyone who feared for his life and expected mutilation of his vital bodily parts would remain; on the contrary he would run for his life, escaping danger as best he could.'

Having said this, we fell silent. After a short time the emperor said, 'What do you think he will do?' I replied,

> I suppose that when he has stayed with the Persian ruler[5] for a short time he will send to you, asking to be deemed worthy of immunity,[6] with the Persian ruler as a mediator in the matter. He will request an oath from you in confirmation of your sincerity, without which he will not return to you, I think.

The emperor was troubled about this, being uncertain about the matter. But a few days later letters were sent to the emperor by those who were in command of armies[7] in Bithynia and Mesothynia.[8] The letters were from the *megas konostablos* to them; they are in summary as follows. He had written to each one of them:

> With fear of the emperor in my heart and apprehensive that something terrible might happen to me, I fled. Prevail prudently and bravely in your military duties and let the garrisons of the forts and towns be secure and the care and preservation of the whole territory be maintained by you as usual. Carry on, as you would with me there.

The signature indicated the *megas konostablos*. When the emperor saw these letters he was cheerfully disposed toward the matter and had confidence in my words.

§64 *The wedding of Maria and Nikephoros which is mentioned at the beginning of this section belongs thematically to the end of the previous section. This marriage was celebrated sometime after 17 September (see §63.31) and before 23 October, when the emperor left Thessalonike (see §67.1). The sequence of events given by Akrop.—treaty with the Bulgarians, marriage of Nikephoros and Maria, news of Michael Palaiologos' flight—is reproduced in the letter of the priest Niketas Karantenos from the metropolis of Miletos to the abbot of St John's, Patmos, which dates to 1256: ed. Nystazopoulou, 286–308.*

The section is mainly an account of a conversation (omitted by Skout.) between Akrop. and the emperor Theodore II which took place in Thessalonike in September 1256 and concerns the flight of Michael Palaiologos to the Turks. Akrop. shows himself to be willing to discuss Michael Palaiologos' feelings, thoughts and motives. He indicates personal knowledge of Michael Palaiologos (see also at §65.4, 5) to whom he was, by now, related through marriage. On his kinship with Michael see below, §79.4 and the Introduction, 17–18, 27. Akrop. expands on Michael's activities among the Turks in §65 and gives a conclusion to this episode in §69. For this event in Michael's life which Prinzing ('Ein Mann τυραννίδος ἄξιος', 188–97) interprets as an attempted rebellion but which Akrop., like Michael himself, presents as a 'flight' to safety from Theodore II, see the Introduction, 62.

[1] The marriage was performed by the patriarch Arsenios in Thessalonike, according to Skout. (527.4–7; *Additamenta*, no. 46, p. 294). For the patriarch's presence in Thessalonike, see below §67.3. Nikephoros had been designated despot by the emperor John at the time of his betrothal to Maria: §49.40. This second reference can perhaps be attributed to the need for the emperor Theodore to confirm the title.

[2] Although he indicates that he has, Akrop. has not mentioned above that Michael Palaiologos had been given the office of *megas konostablos.* This was bestowed on him when he was cleared of charges of treason and given in marriage to the emperor John's niece. See Pach. I, 37.3–41.3; §51 and §52.1 for the date, winter 1253–4. Earlier he had a command in Serres and Melnik: see §46.4. Michael is the first attested holder of the office. Pach. (I, 37.5–7) says it was bestowed on men who led all the Latin soldiers who were subjects of the empire. Cf. Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 175.12–14. The title appears to be of Latin derivation, perhaps from the Normans of Sicily. Anna Komnene mentions a general under Bohemond who was a *konostablos*: 5.6.1; Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 28, 245. Even before he was made *megas konostablos* Michael had good relations with the Latins. See above at §50, where they speak in favour of Michael's innocence.

[3] 'This entire place' refers to Mesothynia and the Optimates theme: see §64.8. Akrop. does not say but it can be surmised that Michael Palaiologos was moved from a command in Melnik and Serres, having been accused of treasonable behaviour in that area, to another command in Asia Minor, after he was reconciled with the emperor John in the winter of 1253–4. See §51. According to Michael, while he was in command there, still in John III's lifetime, he made war on the Latins: Typikon for St Demetrios, ed. Grégoire, 451–3; cf. Pach. I, 43.6–8.

[4] The reason Akrop. gives for Michael's flight, fear of blinding, is corroborated by Pach. (I, 43.6–8) who adds that a certain Kotys, a friend of Michael from the palace, told him to flee or expect to be blinded. Pach. (I, 41.6–43.3) gives a list of members of the aristocracy whom Theodore had blinded. Michael Palaiologos himself attributed his troubles with the emperor to 'envy' which led others to make malicious statements to the emperor and to raise fears in his mind. See Michael's autobiographical introductions to his typika: Dmitrievski, *Opisanie*, 790; ed. Grégoire, 453. Likewise Holobolos, writing in the mid-1260s, refers to the 'envy' which caused Michael to flee: ed. Treu, I, 34.23–35.21.

[5] The sultan Izz al-Din Kaykaus II: see §53, §61, §69.

[6] For *συμπάθεια* as 'pardon', 'immunity', see Kekaumenos, *Strategikon*, ed. Litavrin, 264.13, 28–9; Manuel I Komnenos' novel on murder and asylum:

ed. Macrides, 'Justice under Manuel I Komnenos: four novels on court business and murder', 158.57; 196.

[7] I understand *τῶν στραταρχούντων* (Heis. 135.22) to be 'those who were in command of armies', while Angold (*Exile*, 193–4) interprets this as a reference to *kastrophylakes*. Cf. Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 313–14.

[8] Michael's command included Bithynia and Mesothynia, north of Bithynia, probably to be identified with the Optimates theme, opposite Constantinople: Pach. I, 43.6–8. But see above §7.13. Eustathios of Thessalonike (*The Conquest of Thessalonike*, 30.26) speaks of the land of the 'Thynians and Bithynians', in describing Andronikos' journey to Constantinople by way of Sinope on the Black Sea coast. See also §64.3.

65. Since we have reached this point in the narrative, we shall broaden the scope of the history, as is necessary; for the things that happened to Michael Komnenos in his flight are deserving of many words.[1] He came to the dwellings of the Turcomans.[2] This is a people who occupy the furthest boundaries of the Persians and feel implacable hatred for the Romans, delight in plundering them, and rejoice in booty from wars; this especially at the time when Persian affairs were agitated and thrown into confusion by the Tatar[3] attacks. Some Turcomans chanced upon him, as if he were a windfall, and casting a greedy eye on his possessions, snatched everything of his, gold, silver, horses, woven materials and the very garments in which his men were clad. They also divided up all those attending him, each taking into his own service the man he had seized. Barely escaping from their hands, preserved by divine providence, Michael Komnenos reached the ruler of the Persians,[4] denuded of everything. The latter greeted him not as a newcomer fugitive but welcomed him gladly. For he had learned of the man's nobility and all the magnates who were with the Persian ruler marvelled at his appearance and his disposition and, as one of the ancients says, they judged it 'worthy of monarchy'.[5] Engaging in a few words with him they quickly recognized the constancy of the man; they saw evidence of his military skill, his precision in wars, and his knowledge in the matters that pertain to battles. So, then, letters of the sultan were produced, although in vain, so that his plundered possessions and his distributed servants, everything and everyone, might be collected and brought to him.

Since the outcome of the battle stood on the razor's edge[6] for them (for the Tatars, having plundered most of the Muslims' land, were encamped at Aksaray),[7] there was every need for the Persians to stand up to the Tatars in battle; and so the Persians appointed Michael Komnenos to be commander of the Christian forces.[8] He was in a foreign land, and although he considered alliance with the Muslims abominable lest, as he used to say,[9] the pious blood of the one falling in battle should be mixed with unholy infidel blood, he was

given courage by divine grace and, having regained his brave spirit, he went forth to battle. The part of the army drawn up in battle order by Michael Komnenos won a victory by storm over the Tatars opposing him, with Michael himself first striking in the chest with a spear the man who rode in advance of the army; he died from the wound after a short time,[10] as those who know said.

The Tatars were defeated by the part of the army commanded by Komnenos and were already turning to flee, but a certain man renowned among the Persians (he had the dignity of an *amirachoures*;[11] this is great among the Persians), who had a long time ago conceived disloyalty toward his race, gave birth to it then and, taking the whole army that was under him, went forth to the Tatars. Thenceforth the opposite was to be seen: those who had shortly before been the pursuers were fleeing and turning their backs to be wounded by the enemy. Many Persians were falling, struck by the arrows of the Tatars. Those who were victorious gave chase up to a long distance. When this had happened, Michael Komnenos joined on the road the *megistos stratopedarches* of the Persian armies (whom the Persians call *peklarpakis*)[12] and they marched very many days, fighting sporadically, with the army pursuing them. Since the home of the said *peklarpakis* happened to be at Kastamon,[13] they pressed on and arrived there. The race of the Tatars overran all the territory under the Muslims. But let the narrative concerning these matters wait here,[14] while earlier events hold forth, so that the account of the history can proceed in sequence.

§65 *The events recounted here, Michael's 'flight' to the Turks, his command of an army against the Tatars, and his retreat after the defeat of the Turks, took place in 1256, late summer to late autumn. For the chronology, see Failler, 'Chronologie', 16–19. Akrop. uses this episode to highlight the future emperor's military qualities and noble spirit. See §65.5 and the Introduction, 62. He presents a defence for Michael's actions which is similar to Michael's own version of events in his typika for the monasteries he refounded in Constantinople: he had to flee because of fear of the envy of others and the emperor's punishment, but God saved him; 'preserved by divine providence', 'he was given courage by divine grace'. Other sources for Michael's flight to the Turks are the contemporary letter of Niketas Karantenos (ed. Nystazopoulou, 286–308), Pach. (I, 43–5), the typikon for the monastery of St Demetrios, Constantinople: ed. Grégoire, 451–3; typikon for the monastery of St Michael, Constantinople: ed. Dmitrievski,* Opisanie, *790–1; Greg. (I, 57.19–60.3); Sphrantzes (ed. Grecu, 158); Holobolos (ed. Treu, 34.23–35.21). Akrop.'s account, while similar in broad lines to those of Michael and Holobolos, gives information about Michael found otherwise only in Afsarayî, a fourteenth-century Persian source: see §65.13. On this episode, see*

Korobeinikov, Byzantium and the Turks in the thirteenth century, *42–68; the Introduction, 93–4.*

¹ Akrop. seems willing to 'broaden the scope of the account' and to use 'many words' whenever Michael Palaiologos is the subject.

² According to Pach. (I, 43.25–6), Michael crossed the Sangarios river, the boundary between the Turks and the Byzantines, making his way to the sultan. Only Akrop. (and Skout.) refers to the Turcoman attack on him. The Turcomans (Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 327) were in evidence along the edge of the Anatolian plateau, especially along the Byzantine–Seljuk frontier in the west where Michael would have encountered them. Both western and Byzantine writers complain of their raiding activities. See Vryonis, *The decline of medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor*, 133–4, 185–94.

³ For the Tatars (*Ταχάριοι*: see Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 329), see also at §40.17, §41.6, 8, §42, §59, §61.

⁴ The 'ruler of the Persians', the sultan Izz al' Din Kaykaus II, was at Iconium. For him see §69. Akrop. uses the name 'Persians' of the Seljuk Turks interchangeably with 'Muslims'. See §6, §10, §23.

⁵ Euripides, *Aiolos*, fr. 15: *πρῶτον μὲν εἶδος ἄξιον τυραννίδος*. For other citations of this passage by Byzantine writers, see A. Nauck, *Tragicorum graecorum fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1926), 367, and Prinzing, 'Ein Mann *τυραννίδος ἄξιος*', 196–7 n. 46. This expression of admiration is usually put in the mouth of an adversary who cannot fail to recognize the quality. Bryennios describes in this way Alexios Komnenos' regard for his prisoner, the rebel Bryennios: ed. Gautier, 281.11–12. Akrop. here attributes the observation to the enemy, the Turks, removing from himself the responsibility for the suggestion that Michael showed himself worthy of the throne before Theodore's death and while he was engaged in an act of questionable loyalty. Prinzing, 'Ein Mann *τυραννίδος ἄξιος*', 188–97, suggests that Michael did not 'flee' to the Turks out of fear, as all the sources relate, but rather sought their support for a rebellion against Theodore II. This is also why, according to Prinzing, Michael had so much wealth with him. For a different view, see Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks in the thirteenth century*, 42–68.

⁶ For this expression, see at §9.5, also in the context of battle with the Turks.

⁷ Akrop. refers to the Tatar invasion of 1256, led by Bayju: see Ibn Bibi, 269–73; Cahen, 'Quelques textes négligés concernant les Turcomans de Rûm au moment de l'invasion mongole', 131–9. Akrop. renders the Turkish Aksaray, southeast of Lake Tatta, in Cappadocia, as 'Axara'. It was one of the principal cities of the Seljuk sultanate on the eve of the Mongol invasions, according to the fourteenth-century chronicler Baïbars Mansûrî. Akrop. does

not mention Aksaray's ancient name, Koloneia, nor does he take care to point out that 'Axara' is a foreign name, as he does in other cases. His use of the Turkish name is perhaps a sign that the original name had been forgotten. At least at the time of Chon.'s (53.45–6) writing, however, both the ancient and Turkish name were known. See Wittek, 'Von der byzantinischen zur türkischen Toponymie', 48–9.

[8] Michael, in his typikon for the monastery of St Michael, says that he led 'Persian' troops (ed. Dmitrievski, 791: *μοίραν φέρων Περσῶν*). Other Greek sources refer to the 'Romans' under Michael's command: letter of Karantenos (ed. Nystazopoulou, 289; Greg. I, 58.19–24; Sphrantzes, ed. Grecu, 158.10–13: 'Christians'). Pach. (I, 45.1–4) reports that he led his contingent of men under the 'imperial standard' 'to appease the emperor Theodore should he hear about it'. See Korobeinikov, 'Orthodox communities in eastern Anatolia', 197 and n. 4, who argues that the men Michael led were Greek subjects of the sultan.

[9] Here, as at §64, Akrop. shows his intimacy with Michael Palaiologos.

[10] Although all the Greek sources agree that Michael won a victory over the Tatars, only Akrop. mentions Michael's fatal blow to the leader of the Tatar army.

[11] Other sources relate the flight of the Turks after the battle at Aksaray on 14 October 1256 (see Ibn Bibi, 273) but only Akrop. gives as an explanation of their flight the defection of the amir akhur, the emir's first equerry: Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 68; *EI* I (1960), 442. The sultan himself also fled the day after the battle, leaving Iconium for Antalya (Ibn Bibi, 273–4); letter of Karantenos (ed. Nystazopoulou, 289).

[12] Akrop. states that the *peklarpakis*, 'beglerbeg' is the equivalent of the '*megistos*' *stratopedarches*, that is, the beglerbeg is higher in rank to the *megas stratopedarches*, a new title in the Byzantine hierarchy which had been created for George Mouzalon. See §60.5; §65.13; Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks in the thirteenth century*, 42–68.

[13] Akrop.'s version of events describes Michael fighting the Tatars to the end, whereas the letter of Karantenos says that he also fled (ed. Nystazopoulou, 289). Akrop.'s companion, the *peklarpakis*, a Greek transliteration of the Turkish beglerbeg or 'commander of the commanders', the commander-in-chief of the army, was Tavtaş who, as beglerbeg, had control over Kastamon, a town and province in northwest Asia Minor which had come under the Seljuks in the twelfth century. For Tavtaş, see Ibn Bibi, 271, 279. On the title of beglerbeg, see *EI* I (1960), 1159–60; also Cahen, 'Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu au XIII^{e} siècle', 137. Kastamon was the original home of the Komnenoi, lost to the Turks in 1176: J. Crow, 'Alexios I Komnenos and Kastamon: Castles and settlement in middle Byzantine Paphlagonia', in M. Mullett and D. Smythe, *Alexios I Komnenos* (Belfast, 1996), 12–36.

Aqsarayî indicates that Michael was granted Tavtaş' title after his death and also his rights over Kastamon. For Aqsarayî, see Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks in the thirteenth century*, chap. 2, 42–68; also the Introduction, 93–4.

[14] For the conclusion of this episode, see §69.

66. When the emperor Theodore learned about events in the land of the Muslims, he made haste to return to the east, concerned not so much for the Muslims as for his own affairs, as he suspected that no small danger would befall the Roman lands also. Taking the entire Roman army with him, he started on the road to the east.[1] In Thessalonike and in the regions in the west, he left his uncle from his grandfather's side, Michael Laskaris,[2] supposedly to guard the territory, giving him a small, compact army of Paphlagonians[3] and, from the Scyths, an army numbering as many as 300.[4] In charge of Prilep and the armies stationed around it, he left Xyleas,[5] the man he had as *skouterios* (he was well named, by Themis);[6] at Veles and the area around it, Theodore Kalampakes, whom they called *tatas* of the court.[7] Constantine Chabaron he put in command of Albanon,[8] while appointing me *praitor*.[9] He put me in charge of them all. This, I think, he did so that through long absence from him I might forget what I had suffered. For, after the beating,[10] he never saw me speak freely to him and with cheerful words, as I had been accustomed. He did this so that the sullenness of my spirit might be dissolved by the long passing of time but perhaps he was also annoyed, wearying in my company; for I often came into friction with him because I knew that he was not disposed to act either reasonably or justly.

§66 *Akrop. inserts an account of affairs in the west (§66–8) before returning to conclude in §69 the story of the Turks and Michael Palaiologos. Before leaving for the east Theodore II made military appointments at Thessalonike, Prilep, Veles and Albanon. Apart from Thessalonike, these towns had come into Nicaean control late in 1252 (§49.34, 35) in a treaty made by Michael II and John III. The men Theodore appointed to military commands have not been mentioned by Akrop. before, with the exception of Michael Laskaris and Akrop. himself. They appear to be men promoted by Theodore, his new men.*

[1] The emperor Theodore II left Thessalonike for the east on 23 October 1256, according to Skout. (529.9–10). The letter of Karantenos to the abbot of Patmos also refers to the emperor's departure for the east: 'he is coming' (ed. Nystazopoulou, 288). Theodore must have been informed quickly of the defeat of the Turks at Aksaray on 14 October (see §65.7) to have made arrangements for the west and be on the road by 23 October. Akrop.'s statement that Theodore took 'the entire Roman army with him' is corroborated by Skout.

(530.27–9; *Additamenta*, no. 47, p. 295) when he describes the size of the army encamped at Magnesia (1257: see below, §69.2): 'So great was the size of the army that the camp stretched from the place called Chlera (Chliara?) to the narrows of the river [Hermos].' For the Nicaean army, see the Introduction, 97–9.

[2] Michael Laskaris, brother of the emperor Theodore I, is mentioned with greater frequency from the reign of Theodore II and later, together with his brother Manuel. See §55.3. Akrop. expresses hostility towards the brothers, especially Manuel; here too his sarcastic 'supposedly' implies incompetence on Michael's part. It is significant that Theodore II gave Michael Laskaris a post in Thessalonike, since he was probably among those conspirators who surrendered the city to the emperor John III in 1246: see §45.10. The great-uncle of Theodore II would have had knowledge of the city and connections in it.

[3] Paphlagonia, the narrow coastal region along the Black Sea whose major city was Pontic Herakleia, had come under Nicaean control by 1214: see §11. For the composition of the Nicaean army, see the Introduction, 98–9.

[4] The Scyths or Cumans in the army had been transferred from the Balkans by the emperor John III to Asia Minor where they had settled and were baptized. They served in campaigns in the west. See above §40, §59.

[5] Xyleas, known only from Akrop.'s account, was held in high regard by the emperor Theodore (§68); he seems to be one of the emperor's new men. Akrop. dislikes him and doubts his merit: §70.7. He makes a snide comment about him on the basis of his name, 'wood man', which he states is appropriate to the man—'well named, by Themis'. Xyleas held the honorary title of *skouterios* which is not attested before him. See Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 183.11–15; 196.12–17; Guilland, 'Préteur du peuple, skoutérios, protokomès', 85. For an early fourteenth-century Xyleas in Smyrna, see MM IV, 260; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 154.

[6] Themis, goddess of Justice, is an apostrophe favoured by Akrop.: see §50.23.

[7] Theodore Kalampakes is known only from Akrop. but the name is attested in the area of Smyrna in the 1280s: MM IV, 129, 267–9; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 165. He is the first recorded '*tatas* of the court' which appears to be an honorary title often attached to men who held military positions. See Guilland, *Recherches* I, 577; II, 279, 283; Andreeva, *Ocherki*, 41–2.

[8] Members of the Chabaron family are attested in the twelfth century in the vicinity of Thebes: see N. Svoronos, *Recherches sur le cadastre byzantin et la fiscalité aux XI^e et XII^e siècles: le cadastre de Thèbes* (Paris, 1959), 72. According to Akrop. (§79), Constantine Chabaron grew up with Michael Palaiologos. The latter says of himself that he was brought up at the court of the emperor John III (ed. Grégoire, 451). Chabaron may have already held a

command in Albanon (which came into Nicaean control in 1253: §49) before this time. In a letter to George Mouzalon, the emperor Theodore says that he is sending Mouzalon a horse from Albanon which is a gift of Chabaron. A reference to the Bulgarians in this letter could be an indication that it was written during Theodore's Bulgarian campaign of 1255–6. See *Epistulae*, 250.1–17. For Chabaron, see §68, §79.

[9] Akrop. succeeded Andronikos Palaiologos (1246–8?) and Theodore Philes (1248–?) as *praitor*, based in Thessalonike, although it is only in his own case that Akrop. specifies the title: see §46.2, 7; the Introduction, 27–8. For the duties of a *praitor* see §46.2 and §68.

[10] Akrop. refers to the episode which took place two months earlier: §63.

67. The emperor left for the east,[1] while I was left behind with the men in the west. Departing from Thessalonike,[2] I arrived at Berroia; the pope's emissaries were there whom I was to dismiss by imperial order.[3] I stayed there a short time for the dismissal of the emissaries and a few other matters; then, leaving from there, I started on the road leading to Albanon. I passed through Servia and by Kastoria and, having given orders concerning Ochrid, arrived at Albanon.[4] From there, with the leading men of the region, I arrived at Dyrrachion.[5] I stayed there for eight days and left, having organized and arranged everything on the way as I deemed necessary, and the affairs at Dyrrachion in the same way. Then I set out from Dyrrachion, passed through the region of Chounavia[6] and crossed the mountain they call Kake Petra,[7] went to the area around Mati and from there made for Debre.[8] Meeting with everyone along the way, those in the towns and in the local armies, as well as those who managed fiscal matters,[9] I went through Kytzavis,[10] and arrived at Prilep. This journey from Thessalonike to Prilep itself I made in three months in the winter season; for it was December when I set out from Berroia and at the end of February I was at Prilep.[11]

§67 *Akrop. describes his movements as* praitor *from late October 1256 until February 1257 (see at §67.11). He makes a rare reference to ecclesiastical affairs, the presence of papal ambassadors. See §67.3.*

[1] On 23 October 1256 (see above §66.1), although he did not cross the Hellespont until the beginning of December (Skout. 530.12–13).

[2] Akrop. must have stayed in Thessalonike from late October until December: see below at §67.11. Like Andronikos Palaiologos and Theodore Philes, his predecessors as *praitores*, he was based in Thessalonike: see §46.2, 7.

[3] Pope Alexander IV sent Constantine, bishop of Orvieto, and other legates *ad partes Grecorum* in mid-July 1256. On this mission see Schillmann, 'Zur

byzantinischen Politik Alexanders IV', 108–31; Laurent, 'Le pape Alexandre IV (1254–1261) et l'empire de Nicée', 26–55; Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1332, pp 137–9. Skout. (529.14–15) adds that the legates went to see the emperor when he was still in Thessalonike. Thus, the meeting must have taken place between 14 September (see above, §64) and 23 October. However, Akrop.'s statement, and especially his use of the verb and noun *ἀπεκβαλεῖν*, *ἀπεκβολὴν* (Heis. p. 139.26, p. 140.2) have led to the erroneous impression that the emperor did not meet with the pope's emissaries but rather sent them away. See Schillmann, 'Zur byzantinischen Politik Alexanders IV', 112 and Laurent, 'Le pape Alexandre IV', 42, for this interpretation. The meaning, however, of the verb is to 'dispatch', to make a formal leave-taking. See a letter of Theodore II (*Epistulae*, 58.65–6) which refers to the *εἰσδοχή* and *ἀπεκβολή*, the 'reception' and 'dismissal' of ambassadors. Confirmation that the emperor, patriarch, and other bishops who had come to Thessalonike to celebrate the marriage of Nikephoros to Maria did indeed meet the legates and had discussions with them comes from the letter of Manuel Disypatos, metropolitan of Thessalonike, written on behalf of the patriarch Arsenios: Pieralli, 'Una lettera del patriarca Arsenios', 178–85, here at 183.91–102. Theodore met with them in Thessalonike, therefore, before he left for the east in late October (§67.1).

4 For Albanon see above §14.11 and §25.13, §49.30, §66.8.

5 Servia and Dyrrachion had been acquired a few months earlier by cession from the despot Michael (§63.28). Kastoria, Ochrid, and Albanon came under Nicaean authority in 1252/3: see §49. Ochrid was the key to the Albanon area: see at §67.4, at §68.5; Ducellier, 'L'Arbanon et les Albanais au XI^{e} siècle', 367–8.

6 Chounavia: a province of the see of Dyrrachion, the region along the Adriatic coast between Dyrrachion and the Mati river: Stadtmüller, 'Forschungen zur albanischen Frühgeschichte', 160–73, here 171 n. 53. Eustathios' account of the siege of the city by the Normans makes reference to 'Chounavitai' who guarded the towers in Thessalonike: §72; Melville-Jones, 203; Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II, 347.

7 In her description of Alexios I's campaign against Bohemond in the Albanon–Divra region, Anna Komnene (13.5.4) mentions 'a mountain pass called Petra locally' which is probably located in the Kake Petra, in the Chounavia region: D. A. Zakythinos, '*Μελέται*', *EEBS* 21 (1951), 199 n. 9.

8 For Debre (Divra), east of the Drin river which is itself north of the Mati river, see also §68; Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 392.7–8: *θέματι τῶν Δεβρῶν*. Akrop. travelled north and east from Dyrrachion. The fact that Akrop. does not refer to this northern region as 'Albanon' does not mean, as Ducellier ('L'Arbanon et les Albanais au XI^{e} siècle', 368) thinks, that he is making a distinction between Albanon in the Shkumbi river valley and the Mati river

valley region to the north. Akrop. describes Kroai, situated in this upper region between the Ishmi and the Mati rivers, as 'the fortress of Kroai in Albanon' (§49.35). For him, therefore, 'Albanon' includes both regions. See also Skout. (529.23) who adds that Chounavia (north of Dyrrachion) is a 'region of Albanon'.

9 For Akrop.'s duties as a *praitor*, see §68.7. 'Those who managed fiscal matters' is a phrase which refers to the work of a *praktor*, *ὁ ἐνεργῶν*: Angold, *Exile*, 258; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 125–6.

10 Modern Kičevo, east of Divra: see also §70.6; Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 279.

11 Akrop. made a three-month journey from Berroia in a counter-clockwise direction to Prilep, almost completing a circle.

68. When I arrived there an altogether terrible report came to my ears. The report was that Constantine Chabaron,[1] who had received the governorship of Albanon from the emperor, was won over to the side of the despot Michael through the contrivances of Michael's wife's sister, Maria.[2] She had had a husband, Sphrantzes by name, but she was a widow at the time. She pursued Chabaron with wiles and baited his mind with love letters—he was silly in such matters even though otherwise a good soldier—and he was caught in her snares. From that point on, Michael embarked on a course of open rebellion.[3] I learned about the drama while I was at Prilep. With all haste, then, I dispatched a letter to Michael Laskaris, revealing to him through this the events that had taken place, and I wrote that he should go to Pelagonia, so that after I also had arrived there and we had come together, we might deliberate about the matters at hand. We both met, then, in Pelagonia together with the *skouterios* Xyleas. We assumed him to be a military man, as well as Roman-minded; for the emperor Theodore also had a great regard for him thinking that he boasted military experience and possessed the utmost goodwill with regard to him and Roman affairs.

When we met we decided on the following: Michael Laskaris would take his entire army, both the Roman and the Scythian contingents, leave the lands around Berroia—for it was there that he was encamped—set out for Pelagonia and take up a position there. Likewise the *skouterios* Xyleas was to take his entire military corps (that was quite a large number) and join with Michael Laskaris and together they were to take up a position in the region of Pelagonia. The place was advantageous with regard to the warfare with the despot Michael and with the Serbs,[4] for we learned that they [the latter] also had made an agreement with Michael. And so I left them, they having undertaken to carry out the things that had been determined, while I went to Ochrid with my attendant retinue to see if I might somehow be able to straighten out the affairs

of the Albanians.[5] But before that I managed to dispatch Isaac Nestongos, the *epi tes basilikes trapezes*,[6] to Albanon, giving him an order which included, as was customary, a summary of the duties of his command. It was assigned to me and I was given licence to do the following: to replace, as I wished, the tax collectors and administrators of fiscal affairs, commanders of armies and those who held command of regions.[7]

I chose to go to Albanon for the sake of correcting the situation in the area and to learn what the *epi tes basilikes trapezes* had done. When I arrived, I led away the *epi tes trapezes* from Albanon to the best of my strength. For the Albanian people had just put the final touches on the revolt; they had all gone over to the renegade despot Michael. When I myself saw everything in turmoil, I left Debre, for I had stayed there longer than I needed and I was encircled by the enemy, and with a moderate number of men who served me with weapons, I arrived at Ochrid. There I left the *epi tes trapezes* to guard the fortress, passed through Prespa and the place actually called Siderokastron,[8] putting in at Prilep. I thought that I had sailed into a harbour protected from waves.

But there were obstacles for me and for our men there. The rebel Michael had laid hold of the surrounding territories and fortresses; one only, Prilep, was wanting and he was pressing, as much as was in his power, to bring Prilep under him. In this way it would be possible for him to rule over the surrounding area securely. So, not long after, the renegade Michael made his first attack on us with his entire army, and he made attempts on the town by military means. But it was secure and not easily taken; he was relying rather on the plots of the inhabitants. However, on that occasion he was beaten off and, taking his army, he turned back and prowled about in the surrounding places, while we were shut up in the town of Prilep and became confined as if in a prison. This is how our affairs turned out. Now let my narrative deal with events in the east.

§68 *Akrop. relates the actions he took as* praitor *upon learning of Michael II's 'rebellion' (§68.3) in 1257. His defence of Prilep ended in his capture by Michael II and two-year imprisonment.*

[1] See §66.8, §79.3.

[2] Maria, sister of Theodora Petraliphina (wife of Michael II) and daughter of John Petraliphas (see §24), is mentioned ('(S)Phrantzaina') in a chrysobull of Andronikos II (1307) as the former owner, now deceased, of houses and a cistern within the *kastron* of Kanina, on the coast to the south of Dyrrachion. See Alexander, 'A chrysobull of the emperor Andronicus II Palaeologus in favour of the see of Kanina in Albania', 180.61–2, 197–200. On the form of the

name, see V. Laurent, '*Σφραντζῆς* et non *Φραντζῆς*', *BZ* 44 (1951), 373–8. Michael II had her marry Philip Chinardo in 1266, giving Philip Kanina and Corfu. He then had him killed: Pach. II, 641.6–15 and 640 n. 4; III, 55.19–24; Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros, 1267–1479*, 13–14. Judging from her reported behaviour toward Chabaron, and Pach.'s comment (III, 55.21–3) that she thought funeral rites should be 'conducted with Philip's head on a gold plate', she appears to have been a willing agent of Michael II. See *PLP*, fasc. 11, no. 27269.

[3] From this point on in the narrative, Akrop. calls Michael 'rebel' or 'renegade' almost without exception. See also above at §49 where he refers to Michael's 'revolt' (*ἀποστασία*). Michael VIII likewise uses this label to refer to the western Romans: 'the terrible raging against us of the renegades who are of the same Roman race as we'. See his typikon for the monastery of the archangel Michael, Mt Auxenios, ed. Dmitrievski, I, 794. For a possible date of the 1260s for this typikon, see Dennis in *Byzantine monastic foundation documents* III, 1214 n. 1. This was Michael's second act of disloyalty to Nicaea since his alliance with the emperor. See §27.8, §28.3 where Akrop. uses the same label of the caesar Gabalas, and the Introduction, 41–2, 94–5.

[4] The little Akrop. has to say about the 'Serbs' in his *History* (see also §70.5) is negative because of their alliance with Michael II of Epiros. On this see Radić, 'Georgije Akropolit i Srbi', 89–97.

[5] See also below at Heis. 142.20 for the 'Albanian people'. For the earliest reference to 'the Albanians' see E. A. Vranouse, '*Οἱ ὅροι "Ἀλβανοί" καὶ "Ἀρβανῖται" καὶ ἡ πρώτη μνεία τοῦ ὁμωνύμου λαοῦ τῆς βαλκανικῆς εἰς τὰς πηγὰς τοῦ ΙΑ αἰῶνος*', *Σύμμεικτα* 2 (1970), 207–54.

[6] Akrop. has not mentioned Isaac Nestongos before. See also below §72.4. For Andronikos Nestongos, first cousin of the emperor John, who was involved in a conspiracy against the emperor early in his reign, see §23.1. The title of *epi tes basilikes trapezes*, the equivalent of the *epi tou kerasmatos*, was held by another member of the family, George Nestongos, a favourite of Theodore II. For him, see §61.10. At Nicaea the title was given to men with military positions.

[7] Akrop. describes the duties of a *praitor*. See also §46.2.

[8] For Siderokastron (modern Železnec), c. 41 km west of Prilep, see Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 330, 51 n. 143. Akrop. comments on the aptness of the place name, 'iron fortress', by using the expression 'a place actually called'. For this see also above, for Holkos and other places: §22.10. For Prespa, see Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 371–2.

69. When the emperor had crossed the Hellespont,[1] he proceeded to the region of Lydia as quickly as he could, and encamped at Sardis.[2] The sultan,

ruler of the Persians, having the heart of a 'frightened doe', as the poet might say,[3] left his land, since his army had been destroyed, and fled to the emperor. He received him and welcomed him generously, as well as those accompanying him, with gifts,[4] and had them return to their lands, giving them a modest army, which numbered only 400.[5] He appointed Isaac Doukas commander of the army. They also called him Mourtzouphlos; those who are in the habit of playing with names had given this one to his family. He was then *primmikerios* of the imperial court.[6] The Persian ruler, wishing to grant the emperor a favour in return, gave him the town of Laodikeia, and a Roman garrison entered it. But it remained only a short time and this town came again under the Muslims, for it could not be maintained by the Romans.[7] Since the sultan was not able to withstand the Tatars, he deliberated with his chosen men and came to an agreement with the Tatars. They became tributary to them [the Tatars] and from that time the Muslims have paid tribute to them.[8]

When Michael Komnenos Palaiologos (whom we have often mentioned) received an oath of assurance from the emperor, he returned to him and was restored again to his own and enjoyed what belonged to him.[9]

§69 *Akrop. interrupts his narrative of western affairs to bring up to date the account of the Turks and Michael Palaiologos, last mentioned in §65. The events described here took place in late 1256–early 1257. Skout., who accompanied the emperor on his return to the east (see 530.18: 'we came'), gives more precision to the chronology of events (see also §69.1), the movements of the emperor and army in Asia Minor (see §66.1, §69.4), and the exchange of favours between the sultan and the emperor (see §69.7). For Skout.'s presence in the campaign from which the emperor was returning, see §61.*

[1] Although Theodore II left Thessalonike in late October 1256 (see above, §67.1), he did not cross the Hellespont until the beginning of December: see Skout. 530.12–13.

[2] Sardis, on the banks of the Pactolos, at the foot of Mt Tmolos, was on the main route connecting Nicaean and Turkish territory. One of the two centres of the Nicaean empire was situated in this region. See Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis*, 78. See also the Introduction, 87–8. Skout. (530.12–24) indicates that the emperor went to Sardis after Epiphany, 6 January 1257, having left most of the army at Magnesia.

[3] *Il.* 13.102.

[4] As the emperor travelled toward Sardis, he received frequent messages from the sultan, Izz al-Din Kaykaus II, that he was approaching (Skout. 530.15–17). According to Ibn Bibi (273–5), the sultan had fled to Antalya after the battle at Aksaray (cf. letter of Karantenos, ed. Nystazopoulou, 288:

Kalon Oros=Candeloro=Alanya), and from there to the land of Laskaris, with his children and followers. See also Pach. IV, 671.21–673.13. An omen of the sultan's future flight to the emperor had occurred in 1256 when the emperor was encamped at Pegai, on the way back to the west. Both Skout. (522.14–29) and the Logos for St Arsenios (459.276–85) tell the story. On this, see the Introduction, 69. Although the emperor and the sultan met at Sardis, they went together to Magnesia where the emperor had left the army. It was there that they exchanged 'gifts' (Skout. 530.24–7; *Additamenta*, no. 47, pp 294–5). Akrop. nowhere in his account names the sultan (§53, §61, §64, §65), nor does he characterize him, unlike the two previous sultans (§41). Pach. (I, 235.5–10) describes him as licentious and a drunkard. It was to Izz ad Din that Michael Palaiologos had taken flight and the same sultan was once again to seek refuge with Michael when he became emperor: Pach. I, 181–5; IV, 671.21–673.13; Failler, 'Chronologie', 54–5. See the Introduction, 92.

[5] 300: Skout. 531.1.

[6] Isaac Doukas Mourtzouphlos is mentioned above (§49.37) as an ambassador sent to Michael II by the emperor John in 1253. He held the title '*primmikerios* of the court' already at that time. See above, §3.6 for the (nick)name Mourtzouphlos.

[7] In addition to Laodikeia (Denizli), Chonai and two small fortresses in the area, Sakaina and Ypsele, were given to Theodore: Skout. 531.4–7=*Additamenta*, no. 48, p. 295. Chonai and Laodikeia had passed into Turkish control in 1206, by treaty between Theodore I and the sultan Kaykhusraw: Chon. 638.65–8. They remained in the hands of the Turks until the time of this exchange (1257). By 1259–61 the Turcomans had seized them from the Byzantines. See Cahen, 'Notes pour l'histoire des Turcomans d'Asie Mineure au XIII[e] siècle', 336. Akrop. and Skout. differ on the reason for the reversion of the town(s) to the Muslims. Skout. (531.8–9) claims that the emperor gave them back to the sultan.

[8] This statement is one of the few which might help to date Akrop.'s time of writing. See the Introduction, 33.

[9] The reconciliation took place in 1257: Failler, 'Chronologie', 16–18. Pach. (I, 45.12) and Greg. (I, 60.1–2) say Michael was restored to his former title. From Akrop.'s statement it is not clear who took the initiative in resuming relations. Pach. (I, 45.4–12) states that Michael, repenting his actions, appealed to the emperor, using the metropolitan of Iconium as a mediator. In his typikon for the monastery of St Demetrios, Michael gives the impression that the emperor begged him to return, sending letters and embassies to this end: ed. Grégoire, 453. Akrop. and others mention the emperor's oath to Michael *εἰς ἀσφάλειαν*: Pach. (I, 45.9); Greg. (I, 59.13–14); Sphrantzes (ed. Grecu, 158.19–20). The emperor's oath to his subjects, known from the late

Palaiologan period, is thought to have its origins at Nicaea: see Svoronos, 'Le serment de fidélité à l'empereur byzantin', 138–40. This idea is based on this passage and a treatise by Theodore II in which he discusses the mutual rights and obligations of the emperor and his subjects. The emperor refers to a bilateral contract in which the *oikeios* owes the emperor fidelity and services while the emperor must give his subjects protection and benefits: *Opuscula*, ed. Tartaglia, 119–40. The treatise is, however, a philosophical and literary work rather than a literal description of an existing contract. The emperor's oath to his subject was still uncommon in Andronikos II's reign. According to Kant. (I, 83.7–19), Andronikos III had to remind Andronikos II that such an oath of assurance had been sworn by an emperor to Michael Palaiologos before the latter would return from self-imposed exile. It appears, therefore, that Theodore's oath to Michael was exceptional. Greg. (I, 59.10–24) describes, in addition, the oath Michael took 'to remain within the bounds of his subordinate position and not ever to want to seek the imperial office and to have the same good will for Theodore and his son John'.

70. Not very many days had yet gone by and, since the emperor realized that affairs in the west were in great disorder and that most of the territory had been taken by the rebel Michael and it was necessary for a general to be sent with any army in counter-attack, he chose the said Michael Komnenos, giving him also an army from Macedonia which was very small in size and worthless in quality.[1] But Michael Komnenos could not object to the orders he had been given and so, taking that paltry and unwarlike army, he went to Thessalonike and from there, after crossing the Vardar, which the ancients call the Naxeios,[2] he joined Michael Laskaris.[3] When they had deliberated, they proceeded against Berroia, not in order to fight against it,[4] for it was not possible for them to do such a thing, but to plunder the surrounding area. And they plundered a great deal, for their followers carried off a quantity of animals whose number is not easily counted.

While they were doing these things, the ruler of the Serbs[5]—they are a race which violates treaties and never shows gratitude to those who have been good to it, but for a small gain they cast aside and trample on the cup of friendship—learning of the rebellion of the renegade Michael, assembled an army numbering in the thousands and sent it against the Roman lands. Passing by Kytzavis,[6] they plundered the area around Prilep. The *skouterios* Xyleas, who was near the town with the army which was under his command, saw that the army of Serbs was plundering the land and setting fires everywhere. He was a man ignorant in matters of war and with no military experience at all, for he did not have spies at a distance so as to learn from afar of the advance of the enemy, nor did he know how to array an army in battle order.[7] He released each man to rush against the Serbs as he wished. Since their battle order had been broken up and

they were few, they fell into the grip of the Serbs, who were more in number, and they were caught. Some were put to the sword, others were taken alive and carried off as captives. Later when Xyleas himself, the *skouterios*, charged against the Serbs with the remaining soldiers, he barely escaped with his life, crossing mountains, hills and precipitous places, pursued by the enemy. Thus the army at Prilep was destroyed in this way and we were shut up in the town of Prilep, as if incarcerated.

§70 *Akrop.'s account is the main source for the events he narrates in §70–§72. The movements of those left by Theodore II in the west in command of armies cannot be dated with any precision within the year 1257. Akrop. describes the commanders as incompetent, with the exception of Michael Komnenos. The narrative culminates in the capture of Prilep by Michael II, while Akrop. was in command of the fortress.*

[1] Michael Komnenos must have been sent to the west very soon after he returned to Nicaean lands from the Turks: Pach. I, 45.15–22. See §69.9. He does not mention this command in his typikon for St Demetrios. Skout. (531.18–19) omits any reference to the state of the army Theodore gave to Michael. By drawing attention to this, Akrop. may wish to exonerate Michael from any blame in failing to rout the enemy (see below, §71), but it is also likely that he is anxious to underline Theodore II's mean spirit and suspicious nature in dealing with Michael Komnenos. See the Introduction, 60, 62.

[2] Only Akrop. gives the form Naxeios for the Axios, the ancient name for the Vardar river (see above, at §59.1). The same additional initial 'N' appears in Akrop. and Ephraim in the case of Eutzapolis–Neustapolis: §44, §59.

[3] Michael Laskaris was last mentioned as leaving Berroia, where he was encamped, to go to Pelagonia: §68. Presumably Michael Komnenos joined him at Pelagonia.

[4] In December 1256, when Akrop. went to Berroia to dismiss the papal legates (§67.2, 3), it was under Nicaean control. In the meantime, it must have gone over to Michael II.

[5] Stephen Uroš I, the kral of Serbia: see Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben*, I, 317. See above at §68.4, where Akrop. refers to an agreement the Serbs made with Michael II. The Serbs are otherwise only mentioned in the period of 'exile' by Theodore II in his encomium for his father John (ed. Tartaglia, *Opuscula*, 30.157–31.173). Theodore describes in general terms their submission to John and his soothing and healing effect on them.

[6] Akrop. mentions above also, at §67.10, that Kytzavis (Kicěvo) is on the way to Prilep.

[7] See Akrop.'s first mention and characterization of him: §66.

71. This is what happened to the men connected with Michael Komnenos Palaiologos and Michael Laskaris. When they had gained booty in Berroia, they encamped in the region of Vodena, which was level and useful for the feeding of horses. The renegade Michael, the despot (having exact information about the Roman army, how many it numbered and that all except for a small part of it was useless and worthless),[1] selected men from his entire army and, separating the best from the rest—they came to 500 in number—he appointed his illegitimate son Theodore[2] general, and sent them against the Roman army.

At that time Manuel Lapardas[3] had been sent by the emperor with a rough mob of an army to meet with the commanders at hand, and he reproached them for having gone ahead and plundered, leaving him without a share of the profits. The commanders of the army were talking together about these matters while the rabble army under Manuel Lapardas, most of whom were riding mares and had them loaded down with provisions, took the road that passes by the town of Vodena, without the knowledge of the other commanders, so that, arriving before the others, they also might take booty. But the army sent by the renegade Michael to make war on the Romans encountered them in a pass in the mountains of Vodena. When these men, brave soldiers who rode stately horses and were clad in full armour, encountered manikins who were without arms, low-born, and riding mares, they defeated them all instantly. Some of them fled and went to Michael Komnenos, reporting to him what had happened. But he was not disturbed by the unexpected news, for he was strong in arm, brave in disposition, and tried in battle; he had been trained in many previous wars.[4] He armed himself, taking a spear and the military detachment which was under Michael Laskaris and which came from Paphlagonia[5] (this alone was better than the others and capable of fighting, numbering 500 men) and set out against the enemy. Michael Laskaris, who, as was his habit, had not put on a full breastplate but only a half breastplate so that he might easily flee, was on the sidelines of the battle and was watching the action.[6] Michael Komnenos, however, encountering the first person who came against him, hurled his spear and threw him from his saddle. It was the previously mentioned illegitimate son of the renegade Michael, Theodore. When he had picked himself up from the fall, he ran towards Michael Komnenos and entreated him not to have him put to death. But Komnenos did not recognize him and he did not know who he was. He therefore handed him over to a Turk and he killed him.[7] Then, the Paphlagonians accompanying him engaged in close combat with the others, man to man, and the renegade Michael's men were routed at the end of the battle, while those of Michael Komnenos checked them, taking captive more than 20 of the elite men[8] and putting many others to the sword. But Michael

Komnenos' men were not able to drive them away because they were very few in number since, as we said, the soldiers who had left earlier had already been destroyed and had scattered. And so the business turned out unfortunately for them, as it did for those at Prilep.

As Michael Komnenos, Michael Laskaris, and the generals with them were compelled by us to come to Prilep and meet with us, they came whether they wanted to or not.[9] They stayed with us a few days, but since they did not have the force to engage in close combat and fight the renegade Michael, leaving us,[10] they returned. For they perceived the treachery of the inhabitants and they witnessed consciously the doubtful loyalty of those who had been assigned to guard the town.[11] Then I was left behind in Prilep with those who were there to guard the town. This is what the ruler had ordered me to do.

§71 *Akrop. is the only source for the battle at Vodena (Edessa) in 1257.*

[1] Akrop. consistently criticizes the quality of the Nicaean army sent to the west by Theodore II. See above, §70.1.

[2] Michael II had at least two illegitimate sons, Theodore and John. Pach. (I, 47.1–6) mistakenly refers to the presence of a Manuel, not Theodore, at this battle. Polemis (*Doukai*, 94) conjectures that these sons were born to him by his mistress, mentioned in the *Life* of St Theodora of Arta: ed. Moustoxydes, p. 45; PG 127, col. 905. For Theodore's fate at the battle of Vodena, see below §71.7.

[3] Manuel Lapardas is not known from any other source. Andronikos Lampardas, *chartoularios* under Manuel I, was one of the commanders in the victory against Hungary in 1167: Kinn. 271–4; Magdalino, *Manuel I*, 210, 505, 512; N. Oikonomides, 'La tour du grand chartulaire Lapardas à Thessalonique', *Zograf* 27 (1998–9), 33–6. Other members of the family, Theodore and Michael Lapardas, are attested in documents of the second half of the thirteenth century in the Smyrna area: Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 114. See also V. Laurent, 'Légendes sigillographiques et familles byzantines', *EO* 31 (1932), 338–44, for a prosopography of the family.

[4] Skout. (532.25–7) omits these words in praise of Michael Komnenos.

[5] See above, §66.3, for the first reference to Paphlagonians in the army.

[6] I understand *θωρακίδιον* to be a 'half breast-plate'. For this see Parani, *Reconstructing the reality of images*, 115.

[7] Pach. (I, 47.1–6) gives Michael Komnenos the credit for killing the illegitimate son of Michael II whom he calls Manuel (see §71.2). Akrop. uncharacteristically uses the word 'Turk' instead of 'Persian' here. See the Introduction, 51 and n. 313.

[8] See §79.6 where Akrop. refers to the subsequent release of these men by Michael VIII, presumably in 1259.

[9] Above, §2.13, §63.29, Akrop. uses the full phrase from *Il.* 4.43: 'willingly but with an unwilling heart'. Here and at §77, he uses a variation.

[10] Akrop. refers to himself here in the first person plural but later in the paragraph as 'I'.

[11] This is Akrop.'s first reference to the treachery of those guarding Prilep. Akrop. returns to this accusation several times in §72, using periphrastic language to make veiled comments.

72. The renegade Michael attacked us a second time. Since there was a cessation of hostilities and he discovered that the imperial forces did not have the strength to fight him in close combat, he surrounded the town with a guard and set up siege towers. The people inside, those who were with us, thought like him. He made a first attempt, and arming his entire army, he assaulted the town, using archers and slingers who were good shots. In addition, they brought ladders so that they might clamber up around the town with the ladders. But that time they were routed and many of them were killed, struck by stones and arrows, and for some days they were quiet. However, those within, our men, set them going again and there was a more vehement assault on the town and a similar repulse. The enemy were not able to do anything much; they suffered more damage than they themselves caused. Danger struck even a third time, and the same things happened again. At least then the enemy quietened down and withdrew in peace. They did not even dare approach. For when they did come near they suffered more than they inflicted. However, some people who were afflicted with disloyalty thought they would achieve their own ends in the course of the battle. It would be a source of wonder to anyone who heard that the enemy were defeated by one man who had not more than 40 servants and who took heart in faith and truth alone.[1] Since those who had deliberated against us could not achieve their ends by battle and confusion, they concocted the evil quietly. They found an excuse in the management of the provisions for the army that had been drawn up to defend the city. They led the men from the battlements, taking them to the granary. The men who had planned this beforehand opened the gates unopposed and the town of Prilep was taken in this way, not by the excellence of the enemy soldiers, nor because of the place's lack of fortifications, but because of the foolishness and disloyalty of the garrison. We also were taken captive and became prisoner. Nor did the fortress of the upper city help us, for it was a mass of rock, attainable by a 10-rung ladder if enemy fighters were to attack. Our men who harboured hostile thoughts wanted to attack us at night in order to kill us and also take our possessions. But I saw this and we protected ourselves as best we could at the time, and when daylight shone I made an agreement with the renegade Michael. He gave

oaths to us that we would come safely to the emperor's territory from his regions, free of harm and with our possessions, while we released to him that small fortress.[2] But his oaths were false; he perjured himself. He kept us in bonds and moved us from territory to territory in fetters.

When the emperor Theodore heard about these events, he had suspicions concerning me—not rightly—but following human reasoning, he had his suspicions. For he had learned that the best of his generals in the west, in whom he had a great deal of confidence, had become subject to the renegade Michael, some even before the possession of the fortresses, namely the *skouterios* Xyleas, Manuel Ramatas, Poulachas,[3] and some others who were with them; still others had surrendered after possession of the fortresses, that is, the *epi tes trapezes* Isaac Nestongos whom I had appointed to govern Ochrid, as I related earlier;[4] not a few others of the distinguished and renowned men had willingly subjected themselves to the renegade. He had fears with respect to me lest I also do the same. What had just been done to me by him had also disturbed his reasoning. Those who knew me better insisted that I would never act in that way. But when a long time had passed and he learned from those coming forward that I was a prisoner and was confined in gaol and was bound by shackles and handcuffs, he was content with this state and was better disposed towards me. He issued decrees concerning my properties,[5] stating that no one should dare set foot on them at any time and cause damage. This is how things were; affairs turned out in this way for the emperor Theodore.

§72 *Akrop. is the only source for the loss of Prilep to Michael II. Akrop. blames his men at Prilep, those who 'harboured hostile thoughts' and 'were afflicted with disloyalty', who had deliberated against him. Skout. (533) omits the entire account.*

[1] Akrop. appears to be saying that he was the person who accomplished so much against the enemy.

[2] Prilep, taken by Theodore II in 1255 (§59), is characterized here for the first time in Akrop.'s account: 'a small fortress', 'attainable by a 10-rung ladder'. This description corresponds to the fortress which existed on the site from the tenth to the mid-thirteenth century and to the north side of the granite cliffs on which the fortress was built. It is only on this side that the slope is gentle and that access is relatively easy. See Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 319–22; Deroko, 'Markovi kuli—grad Prilep', 83–104.

[3] Manuel Ramatas and Poulachas are not known from any other source. For Xyleas, see §66.5, §68, §70.7.

[4] See §68.6 where Akrop. states that he sent Nestongos to Albanon.

[5] For Akrop.'s properties see the Introduction, 17.

73. Now the ruler of the Bulgarians, Michael, the brother of the emperor Theodore's wife, a man who nurtured a great hatred against his brother-in-law the emperor and against the Romans,[1] was mortally wounded by his first cousin Kaliman, with the knowledge of certain inhabitants of Trnovo, when he [Michael] was staying somewhere outside this town; he died immediately.[2] The man who murdered him, Kaliman, married Michael's wife and expected to make the realm of the Bulgarians his own,[3] but the Russian Ouros came to Trnovo with an army and took his daughter, Michael's wife.[4] Some men had already killed Kaliman, as he fled from place to place. Since the Bulgarian realm was left without a legitimate heir, the leading men met in deliberation and determined to accept Constantine, the son of Toichos, to rule them. But so that the office should appear attractive to him and so that he might appear to govern by inheritance, they sent an embassy to the emperor Theodore requesting that he send his eldest daughter, who was named Eirene, for union with Constantine, son of Toichos, and be joined in lawful wedlock, as she was a granddaughter of the former ruler of the Bulgarians, John Asan, and was fitted for this realm.[5] But since it happened that Constantine Toichos had a lawful wife, they separated her from her husband and sent the woman to the emperor Theodore. This was the state of Bulgarian affairs; thus also the emperor Theodore had peace from them, and affairs were quiet for both sides.

§73 *Akrop. interrupts his account of the activities of the men left behind in Epiros to insert in its proper chronological place a description of Bulgarian succession problems. The death of Michael II Asan and the accession to the throne by Constantine 'Toichos' (Tich) must be dated, on the basis of their position in Akrop.'s narrative, to 1257–8 (see §71, §74). Akrop.'s version of internal Bulgarian affairs is corroborated by an Armenian marginal note of 1258, written in a Gospel book by an Armenian priest in Trnovo: Margos, 'Deux sources arméniennes', 295–300. Pach. (II, 449–51) and Greg. (I, 60) give a different picture of the succession to the throne. See §73.2, 3, 5 below. Akrop. shows in this passage how significant relationship to the ruling family was in the 'realm of the Bulgarians': Kaliman, wishing to usurp power, married the wife of the previous ruler; Constantine Tich divorced his wife and took Asan's granddaughter as his wife. See also §73.5 below; the Introduction, 53, 92 and n. 586.*

[1] Michael II Asan (1246–57) succeeded his half-brother Kaliman (1241–6) to the throne: see above §43.14. On Michael's enmity to the emperor Theodore II and the Romans, see §54–61.

[2] Michael's murder in 1257 by Kaliman is not related by Pach. (II, 449.24) or Greg. (I, 60.4–6) who do not refer to Kaliman at all but who merely state that Michael died. However, the Armenian marginal note of 1258 confirms

Akrop.'s account: Michael was killed by 'Kalajman, the son of his uncle'. See Margos, 'Deux sources arméniennes', 295–300. Kaliman was the son of the (*sebastokrator*) Alexander, Asan II's only brother: §20.1; Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, no. 22, pp 113–15 (Kaliman); no. 8, pp 92–3 (Alexander).

[3] This statement indicates that Kaliman never ruled as tsar. The Armenian marginal note corroborates Akrop. (ed. Margos, 295–7), while the lack of reference to Kaliman by Pach. and Greg. likewise reinforces this point.

[4] The Russian Ouros or 'Ur', Rostislav Michailović, Michael Asan's father-in-law, had been the mediator in the peace treaty negotiations of 1256, the treaty of Regina, between the Bulgarians and Theodore II: see §62.1. For the Ur's daughter, Anna, who had been married to Michael Asan and then to Kaliman, see also above at §62.1.

[5] Eirene was the first-born daughter of the emperor Theodore II and the empress Helen, daughter of Asan II: §74; Failler, 'Chronologie', 67–8. The emperor John III intended her as a wife for Michael Palaiologos (see §51). Constantine, whom Akrop. calls 'the son of Toichos' here and at §74, was half Serb: Pach. II, 45.2. For the name 'Toichos', a Greek transliteration of the Slavic THX, 'calm', 'quiet', see Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III, 474, n. 3; Jireček, *Geschichte der Bulgaren*, 316–17. Pach (II, 449.20–451.23) and Greg. (I, 60.3–61.17) say that Mytzes, a son-in-law of Asan and the next in line to the throne, since Michael Asan had no children, took power in Trnovo. Constantine had to force him out (also Zlatarski, *Istoriia*, 471). Unlike Kaliman and Mytzes, Constantine had no relationship to the ruling family; he strengthened his position through marriage to Eirene. A fresco of 1259 at Boyana, near Sofia, portrays Constantine and Eirene: see K. Miyatev, *The Boyana Murals* (Sofia, 1961), pl. 51. For Constantine Tich (1257–77), see Bozhilov, *Familiata na Asenevtsi*, no. 24, pp 115–18; Iurukova and Penchev, *Bulgarski srednovekovi pechati i moneti*, 85–92. See also §84.

74. After this the emperor Theodore fell seriously ill. The doctors' skills failed in this and all other treatment was exhausted. He was tried by the illness for no short time and his entire body was reduced to a skeleton.[1] In the end he made a statement of repentance and he assumed the monastic habit.[2] As those who saw precisely what happened to him told me, he made a confession worthy of a noble and generous soul. For, imitating the whore of the Gospels,[3] he summoned the one who was at the head of the episcopate of Mitylene for the confession of his sins, and fell to the ground before his feet, washing the earth on which he lay with boundless streams of tears, so that they turned it into mud,[4] as those who saw these things clearly described to me, and he cried out often, 'Christ, I have forsaken thee', interspersing this into the words of his confession.[5] And so he lived for****;[6] he had not yet reigned as monarch four

whole years,[7] for he began his reign in November and came to the end of his life in the month of August.[8] His corpse was taken to the monastery of Sosandra and was buried there, where the emperor, his father, also lay.[9]

When he died the emperor Theodore left three [unmarried] children:[10] one son by the name of John,[11] and two daughters, Theodora and Eudokia.[12] His other two daughters he had joined to husbands before this: the eldest, who was called Eirene, to Constantine the son of Toichos, as we said;[13] the other, named Maria, to Nikephoros, the son of the renegade Michael. At the time of Michael's revolt she paid the common debt; some said that she had often been beaten by her husband Nikephoros but others said that she succumbed to a natural illness.[14]

§74 *Akrop. devotes little space to the subject of Theodore II's illness and death in August 1258, especially in comparison with that of John III (see §52 and §74.1). His brevity cannot be attributed to the fact that he was in Epiros at that time and therefore not well-acquainted with these events, for he states twice that he was informed about the emperor's illness and last days by 'those who saw precisely what happened to him'. His short account appears rather to be motivated by animosity toward the emperor which is shown in the comment about Theodore's confession, 'imitating the whore of the Gospels'. Furthermore, in his account of the emperor's death, he gives no summary of the reign, no description of the emperor's appearance and personal qualities, as he does in the cases of Theodore I and John III. Instead he makes a general statement about Theodore's reign* before *the narrative of the reign: see §52.25, the Introduction, 57–8. Compare Akrop.'s silence with Skout. (535.5–536.12;* Additamenta, *no. 52, pp 296–8) and with Pach. (I, 59.6–63.11). See the Introduction, 68–9, 74–5.*

1 Pach. implies (I, 57.32–3) that the emperor died within the year of the onset of his illness. Akrop. gives no description of the illness beyond 'his entire body was reduced to a skeleton'. His abbreviated description is noteworthy, considering his interest in relating the various stages of the emperor John's illness (§52). Pach.'s account of the emperor's affliction, 'he had seizures and fell often' (I, 53.13–14) has led modern writers to the conclusion that Theodore and his father John suffered from epilepsy. See §52.3; Makris, 'Zur Epilepsie in Byzanz', 390–2. However, no mediaeval writer associates the illnesses of father and son. In a letter to Blem. which cannot be dated, Theodore complains of terrible pain in his arm, and paralysis (*Epistulae*, 65.22–37). In his letters to Akrop. also he complains of illness: *Epistulae*, 81.72–3; 86.4–8; 109.8–11. His use of the expression ἡμιθανεῖς ἐγεγόνειμεν (109.8) indicates paralysis: see §29.4. Blem. gives yet another account of the illness, referring to Theodore's depression and fears: *Autobiographia* I, §85. Theodore himself attributed his affliction to sorcery: Pach. I, 53.22–55.10.

[2] Pach. (I, 63.16) also states that Theodore became a monk. A note to a *synodikon* from Cyprus relates that his monastic name was Theodore: Cappuyns, 'Le synodicon de Chypre au XII[e] siècle', no. 59, p. 491; Polemis, *Doukai*, 110 n. 10.

[3] Luke 7.38. Here, and above at §63, Akrop. makes unfavourable *synkriseis* of the emperor. In both cases Theodore's weakness and uncontrollable passions are highlighted. Whether the image of the 'whore' of the Gospels was apt for Theodore also because of promiscuity is not known.

[4] The 'one who was at the head of the episcopate of Mitylene' can be identified as Gregory, metropolitan of Mitylene (1256–67), known for his attachment to the patriarch Arsenios (Pach. II, 347.26–8) and as the person who ordained Joseph patriarch in 1267 (Pach. II, 395.28–397.7). Gregory is known also from documents concerning monastic properties: MM I, 112, 114, 117, 118–22; Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1331, pp 135–7. The accounts of the patriarch and Skout. corroborate the information Akrop. gives concerning Theodore's confession. Arsenios says that Theodore died 'in a state of exceeding repentance' and having made 'a warm confession': Testament, PG 140, 949C. Skout. (533.30–534.27=*Additamenta*, nos 50, 51), who claims to have his information about Theodore's confession directly from the patriarch, provides the most detail. By agreement with the patriarch Arsenios, Theodore chose the metropolitan of Mitylene as his confessor who then conveyed the confession to the patriarch. Arsenios went to Theodore who behaved in the same way as he had with the metropolitan, falling before his feet and weeping. The patriarch gave the emperor absolution. See §74.5; the Introduction, 68–9, for Skout.

[5] Arsenios gave Theodore a letter of absolution (Skout. 534.21). Blem. relates that the emperor requested written absolution from the patriarch and other bishops but that he refused to sign the document: *Autobiographia* I, §85–6; Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1334, p. 142.

[6] Theodore was 36 when he died: see above, §52.24; Greg. I, 61.18–19.

[7] Akrop.'s use of '*αὐτοκρατορήσας*' is another indication that Theodore had reigned as *basileus* during his father's lifetime. On this, see above, §40.19.

[8] According to a chronicle note in a Vatican ms. (Palat. gr. 25, f. 153v), Theodore died on 16 August 1258: Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* II, no. 22, p. 608. A marginal note in Blem.'s *Epitome physike* or *Manual of Natural Science* (PG 142, 1256C) mentions his death in August: S. G. Mercati, 'Blemmidea', in *Bessarione* 31 (1915), 226–8. Pach.'s description makes an implicit comparison of Theodore's death with Christ's: the day was Friday, and an eclipse of the sun occurred which darkened the sky so much that stars appeared (I, 59.3–6). See also §75.4.

[9] The monastery of Sosandra in the region of Magnesia was founded by the emperor John. See the verses written by Blemmydes, *Curriculum vitae*, ed. Heisenberg, 112–14, 115–19; the Life of the emperor John: ed. Heisenberg, 217–18. For the burial of father and son there, see Pach. I, 81.6–8; above, §53.1. The monastery's dedication is uncertain, as is its exact location. Ahrweiler ('Smyrne', 89–91; 94–6) has located it at Emiralem, the ancient Herakleion of Sipylon. For the inscription on a sarcophagus at Nymphaion which Grégoire believes to be Theodore's tomb, see Grégoire, *Recueil des inscriptions*, no. 84, pp 24–5.

[10] Akrop. names four daughters and one son. Pach., however, refers to a fifth daughter without name who was married to Svetoslav of Bulgaria (I, 243.20–1). On the children of Theodore II, see Failler, 'Chronologie', 65–74. Akrop. does not mention Theodore's wife, Helen, the daughter of Asan II. They were married very young (see above, §33, §34). She had died before Theodore became sole emperor in 1254: see Pappadopoulos, *Théodore II*, 34 and n. 2. Theodore II wrote an 'apology' to his friends who urged him to take a wife; Tartaglia dates the work to c. 1250: *Opuscula*, 109–18.

[11] John IV Laskaris (1250–c. 1305), named after his grandfather John, was born on Christmas Day, if Blem.'s verses comparing the child to Christ, his mother to the Theotokos and the author to the Magi were written for him: *Curriculum vitae*, ed. Heisenberg, 110–11. On John see also, Macrides, 'Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period', 71–3. It is not known when John was proclaimed co-emperor. Akrop. never refers to him as emperor (see at §75.1, 2) and soon in his narrative ceases to refer to him at all: see §76, §77.1. However, Pach. (I, 63.14–16) calls him emperor from his first mention of him, saying that Theodore made the arrangements for the guardianship of the young emperor when he took the tonsure. It is therefore likely that John had already been proclaimed co-emperor.

[12] One of these daughters was married in 1261 to count William of Ventimiglia and the other to a member of the Velincourt family: Greg. I, 92.21–93.3. See A. Failler, review of the *PLP* in *REB* 37 (1979), 287, for Greg.'s confusion of the daughters of Theodore II. Failler, 'Chronologie', 68–72, argues that Theodora was married to Matthew of Velincourt and Eudokia to William of Ventimiglia.

[13] See above, §73.5.

[14] Failler ('Chronologie', 68) argues that Maria died before her father Theodore, on the basis of Akrop.'s statement that she died 'at the time of his [Michael's] revolt'. He identifies the revolt with that of 1257. However, Akrop. may be referring here to Michael's future revolt in 1259, since later, after the 'battle of Pelagonia', Akrop. says that Nikephoros and his wife (*ἡ σύζηγος τούτου*: Heis. 172.8) took refuge with Michael II in the Ionian sea.

She was therefore still alive then. Nikephoros remarried in c. 1265: Pach. I, 315.31–317.4 and 316, n. 1.

75. The emperor Theodore's son John was very young at the time of the death of the emperor, his father. For he was not yet a full eight years old.[1] His father the emperor had made a will, supposedly[2] for the son, but in truth for his *protovestiarios* George Mouzalon. The will made him master of all Roman affairs, so that he had authority over the entire Roman empire until the emperor's son should come of age. Oaths were also taken on this by command of the emperor, by those who were present at the time.[3] But the corpse of the emperor had not lain three days in a tomb[4] when, as if by common agreement, all the Romans who were there gathered together. A considerable army was assembled there[5] but also the noble men of the first rank who had been maltreated by the emperor.[6] One of these was Alexios Strategopoulos, whose son Constantine the emperor Theodore had blinded, while Alexios he had imprisoned;[7] Constantine Tornikes, whom the emperor John had as *megas primmikerios* and who was purged[8] by the emperor's son;[9] Theodore Philes, who also had his eyes gouged out;[10] George Zagarommates, who was the emperor John's *protovestiarites* (the emperor John's son had at first honoured him as *parakoimomenos* but a short time later he purged him);[11] the four sons of the *protovestiarios* Raoul, who were also imprisoned;[12] Nikephoros Alyates, whom the emperor Theodore had honoured a short time ago as *epi tou kanikleiou* but had later cut off his tongue for no reason at all and purged him;[13] as well as many other capable and notable men. They joined the soldiers and they gathered together and went up together to the monastery of Sosandra[14] and at first shout rushed upon the *protovestiarios*, the guardian, and his brothers; for the *protovestiarios* was residing there[15] and was performing the funeral rites for the deceased emperor.

When he became aware of the approach of the people, the *protovestiarios* went inside the church together with his brother Andronikos, whom they named *megas domestikos*, and his eldest brother, whom they called *protokynegos*.[16] But when they saw the crowd coming at them with bare swords, they entered the holy sanctuary itself and, while they were embracing the all-holy altar, they were put to the sword there; their slayers did not feel compassion for them even after the murder.[17] So great was the wrath which all the people nurtured against them that they cut them up limb by limb, or rather, joint by joint, or even dissected small slices of flesh; each man holding fast his own morsel, they satisfied their appetite.[18] Standing around the tomb of the emperor Theodore, they cast reproachful words at him also, because he had entrusted the empire of the Romans and its affairs to loathsome little men, worthless specimens of humanity who had been raised on the songs of the

theatre and took pleasure in the flute and strings and practised singing to the lyre and who were, to use the Homeric phrase, 'false of tongue, nimble of foot, peerless at beating the floor in dance',[19] while he neglected noble men and expert commanders who had given good and pleasing service to the emperor his father. These matters took this turn.

§75 *Akrop. was not present for the events of August 1258 which he relates here. (Although Skout. was in Asia Minor at the time, he follows Akrop.'s account with little change.) In his description of the murder of the Mouzalon brothers Akrop. underlines the role of the men who had been maltreated by the emperor Theodore II, as if to justify the murders. He likewise refers to the presence of the army but, unlike Pach. (I, 79.18–81.3), he does not mention the hatred of foreigners in the army for George Mouzalon, nor that Michael Palaiologos was in charge of the foreigners in the army. Unlike Bar Hebraeus (trans. Budge, 428) and Pach. (I, 81–7) he omits reference to Michael Palaiologos in connection with these events. See §75.18. The men Akrop. lists in this passage were later very closely connected with Michael VIII: see below §75.11, §77, §79, §85. Both here and in other passages Akrop. shows his identification with these men of illustrious families who held high dignities under the emperor John III but fared less well under Theodore II. He repeats the unflattering (Homeric) phrase (§75.19) to describe those whom Theodore II honoured and valued, men like the Mouzalon brothers from whom Akrop. wishes to dissociate himself. Theodore's removal of titles from the noble men enumerated here and the punishments he inflicted on these men would seem to be related to his promotions of the Mouzalons, Angelos, Karyanites, and Akropolites in 1255: §60. On the chronology of events after the death of Theodore II, see Failler, 'Chronologie', 24–7.*

[1] The sources differ on John IV's age: Pach. (I, 57.33): nine; Greg. (I, 62.22): six. Akrop. refers to John by name only here. See below at §76: 'the emperor Theodore's son', and §77.5.

[2] By using 'supposedly' (*τάχα*) Akrop. discredits Theodore's intentions and underlines the emperor's high regard for Mouzalon. Elsewhere also he refers to Theodore's attachment to George Mouzalon (see §60.5) but here he is openly resentful and shows that he sides with those who hated Mouzalon. Pach. (I, 63.14–65.6) gives in great detail the reasons for their hatred.

[3] The will, and the oaths taken on it, are mentioned also by Arsenios (Testament: PG 140, 949C), and Greg. (I, 63.11–13). Two oaths were sworn, one before and one after Theodore's death: Arsenios (949C); Skout. (537.10–17). According to Arsenios, everyone took the oaths, senate, army, the people and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Pach. (I, 77.32–79.5) indicates, unlike Akrop., that even those not present were asked to swear oaths on behalf of the new emperor.

[4] The occasion for the gathering Akrop. is about to describe was the memorial service held for the dead after burial. Such services took place on the 3rd, 9th, and 40th days. Pach. (I, 81.5) and Greg. (I, 65.15) say that the gathering took place on the ninth day: 24 August 1258. On this see Failler, 'Chronologie', 26–7.

[5] The army was encamped at Magnesia, below Sosandra: Pach. I, 81.10–11; I, 81.13–83.14; see also Skout. 530.226–9 and above, §69.2, for the army at Magnesia.

[6] Everyone who was in office gathered at Sosandra for the memorial service: Pach. I, 81.8–9. Except for Zagarommates and Alyates (for them see §75.11, 13), the families Akrop. lists were among Pach.'s 'golden chain' of families of high birth (I, 91.18–93.15) who gathered to discuss who should be the regent for the emperor John IV after the death of Mouzalon. Akrop. mentions the emperor's maltreatment of these men without further discussion. Pach. (I, 41.6–43.3; 61.6–22) explains that both Theodore's illness and his belief that merit and not blood should be rewarded drove him to take the measures he did. He felt more secure having eliminated the source of danger to him, the ambition and arrogance of his relatives.

[7] Alexios Strategopoulos was mentioned above (§49.12 and §57.6) as a commander under the emperor John III and under Theodore II. The latter was enraged by Strategopoulos' performance in the Bulgarian campaign of 1255. It may be for this reason that he was imprisoned. Pach. (I, 93.3–8) relates that his son Constantine was blinded by Theodore because he treated the emperor with disdain when he became sole emperor after his father's death. He adds that it was at the same time and for the same reason that Theodore Philes (see §75.10) was blinded. Pach. (I, 41.17–18) states that Constantine Strategopoulos was married to a niece of the emperor John III, the daughter of the *sebastokrator* Isaac Doukas: Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I, 3, no. 2756, pp 1577–9. For Alexios under Michael VIII, see §77, §85.

[8] A contemporary example of the use of *καθοσιόω* (Heis., 'Index verborum', p. 321, p. 155.1–2, 5–6, 9) to mean 'remove', 'suspend', is found in the patriarch Germanos' reply to Demetrios Chomatenos, ed. Prinzing, 'Antigraphe', 34.6; 39–40 n. 49.

[9] Constantine Tornikes, like Alexios Strategopoulos, disgraced himself in the 1255–6 Bulgarian campaign and may have been suspended as *megas primmikerios* for this reason: see §57.7. See §82, §84.

[10] Theodore Philes replaced Andronikos Palaiologos in Thessalonike when the latter died. See §47.7. That Theodore II did not like Philes is evident from a letter he addressed to Akrop. during his father's reign: *Epistulae*, 105.23–106.41. Pach. (I, 93.10–12) claims that Philes was blinded at the same time as

Constantine Strategopoulos and for the same reason (I, 93.6–8), disdain of the emperor. This is Theodore's complaint about Philes in his letter to Akropolites: *κατεφρόνησεν* (*Epistulae*, 106.29). For Philes under Michael VIII, see §79.

[11] George Zagarommates is attested as the owner of considerable property in the area of Smyrna (MM IV, 11, 31, 232–6; Ahrweiler, 'Smyrne', 177–8) and was active in the reigns of John III, Theodore II and Michael VIII. From documents concerning his property it can be ascertained that he was *protovestiarites* at least from 1235 (MM IV, 11) and that he died in 1261 (MM IV, 236). His seal as *protovestiarites* survives, hanging from a document of July 1251, an *apokatastasis* for the monastery of Patmos concerning its property of Pyrgos, near Miletos: MM VI, 191=Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Βυζαντινὰ Ἔγγραφα* II, 160.46–7, 163 n. 10; Oikonomides, *Dated Byzantine lead seals*, no. 134, pp 126–7; also Skout. 536 n. 1. His title of *parakoimomenos* is known only from this passage. Guilland, *Recherches* I, 202–15, esp. 208. Like all the other men mentioned in this passage as victims of Theodore II, Zagarommates found favour with Michael VIII who refers to him as his 'uncle' and as *panhypersebastos* in a chrysobull of 1259 (Vranouse, *Βυζαντινὰ Ἔγγραφα* I, 128.26). He does not appear to have been a *panhypersebastos* before the reign of Michael VIII.

[12] Alexios Raoul, *protovestiarios* under the emperor John III and a commander (§40: 1241 and §49: 1253), was also related to that emperor by marriage to his niece (§49.43). His title was removed by Theodore II who bestowed it on George Mouzalon and who married Andronikos Mouzalon, *megas domestikos*, to Raoul's daughter: see Pach. I, 41.8–10; 41.12–13. For Alexios' sons John, Manuel, Isaac, and another whose name is not known, see Fassoulakes, *The Byzantine family of Raoul-Ral(l)es*, 17–23. For John Raoul see below §77, §82.

[13] Alyates was a *grammatikos* under the emperor John: §49.24. As *epi tou kanikleiou* he would have had chancery duties: see Angold, *Exile*, 161–4. Skout. adds (537.3–4) that the emperor Theodore confiscated Alyates' property when he had him mutilated. Michael VIII restored him to his former title and sent him to Sicily on a diplomatic mission in 1259: §79.7. For his seal as *epi tou kanikleiou*, see Laurent, *Corpus des sceaux* II, no. 228, pp 108–9.

[14] For Sosandra's location, in a mountainous region above Magnesia, see above §74.9.

[15] Literally, 'he had his tent there', an indication of temporary residence. See also above at §52.11.

[16] Two of the three brothers were mentioned above (§60) in the context of the promotions made by Theodore in 1255 at Lampsakos. The eldest brother is not mentioned by name either by Akrop. or by Pach. (I, 41.13–14) who

attributes the title of *protoierakarios* (first falconer) to him. Greg. (I, 66.2), however, calls this brother Theodore. See Failler, I, 40, n. 6. On the title of *protokynegos*, keeper of the imperial game preserve, see Guilland, *Recherches* I, 600–3. All three brothers had been *paidopouloi*, assigned to the young Theodore in the palace: Pach. I, 41.14–15. Akrop. uses the third person plural of the imperfective, 'they called' (κατωνόμαζον, ἐκάλουν: Heis. p. 155.18, 19) to stress that he had no part in, and wanted nothing to do with, the titles these men held.

[17] The Mouzalons' attempt to seek asylum in the sanctuary was disregarded.

[18] The 'appetite' (ἐπιθυμία) is for revenge. The details of the Mouzalons' murder, their seeking of asylum in the sanctuary of the church, the brutality of their murder and dismemberment, the special pleasure taken in their deaths, are related also by Pach. (I, 79–87) and Bar Hebraeus (trans. Budge, 428). They, however, attribute the murder of the brothers to the Latins in the army under the control of Michael Palaiologos. Pach. (I, 87.20–7) adds that it was a certain 'Karoulos' who killed George Mouzalon. Akrop. refers to the murderers as 'they', 'the crowd', 'the people', having previously mentioned that the army and the 'noble men of the first rank' were gathered at Sosandra. Later, at §77.7, he names Karyanites as the murderer.

[19] *Il.* 24.261. Akrop. cites the same phrase above (§60.8) when he describes the promotion of the Mouzalons and other men the emperor Theodore favoured. In both passages Akrop. distances himself from them. See the Introduction, 24–7.

76. The Roman people and those in office and those of the military divisions, together with the holy order—the patriarch was also present with them[1] and some of the more distinguished bishops—deliberated on public matters, as to who would be worthy of taking on the administration of these matters and would be better than the others at setting affairs in order. For they did not think it proper for the Roman empire, being so great, to be governed by a fruit-picking and dice-playing infant,[2] but they judged that it was necessary for the man capable of saving the ship of the Romans to be seated at the imperial helm. For there were many headwinds buffeting against it, and wave upon wave crashing against it and throwing it into disorder and, to put it simply, it was in the midst of a great storm and in need of a brave pilot to get the upper hand of the dangers which were assailing it. To begin with, the lands bordering on the Persians were disturbed by the attacks from the Tatars advancing against Persians, for they had not yet made a final peace treaty or agreed on secure truces and agreements.[3] The lands in the west up to the Naxeios[4] river itself, which the common people call the Vardar, the renegade

Michael had subjected and he had brought to terms the small towns and fortresses in it; he ruled them without fear, and was master of them without danger.[5] In addition, another apprehension troubled most people, especially those who were prudent. I mean the marriage connections of the renegade Michael. For he married his daughter Helen to the king of Sicily, Manfred, as we mentioned earlier,[6] and he contracted another marriage alliance for his daughter Anna with the prince of Achaia.[7] There was also the race of the Latins in Constantinople, also enemies of the Romans, among whom Baldwin ruled as emperor.[8]

As times were difficult for the Roman empire, the prominent men were looking for the one who would lead them well. The eyes of all were on Michael Komnenos, whom the narrative has often mentioned. But since it was necessary that questions be put to the people, so that they might have from them proof of their wish and know the inclination of each one, the inquiry was made according to race and rank. First, Romans were asked and, altogether in unison, as if with one voice, they said that they wanted Michael Komnenos to be guardian and caretaker of affairs, and to have him as their own master. The Latin race,[9] when asked, did not need much time to answer but they also immediately asked for Michael Komnenos to be leader of all. But when the Scythian race also was asked, they answered not in a barbarian tongue but in Greek and intelligibly,[10] and they affirmed that they knew of no one better than Michael Komnenos to govern all. Yet when the holy order saw that Michael Komnenos felt no small qualms about taking charge of Roman affairs—that is to say, he shrank from the undertaking and put it off and supposedly gave as a reason that he would be transgressing the oath he had sworn a short while ago on behalf of the emperor Theodore's son—they not only granted their unwritten consent to the act but even produced a written document which, along with the patriarch, all the bishops signed, stating that not only would he not give an account for the deed at the impartial tribunal of Christ but that divine wreaths would be plaited for him because he had come for the salvation of the Christian people. In this way they made Michael Komnenos put aside his timidity and think sensibly, as was necessary.[11]

§76 *In his account of the rise of Michael Palaiologos to imperial power in §76–§77, which took place in the period from August 1258–1 January 1259, Akrop. omits a stage, the first assembly which met at Magnesia in August to decide on a successor to Mouzalon as guardian for John IV. The patriarch Arsenios was not present at that first meeting: see §76.1. As a result of these deliberations, known from Pach. in great detail, Michael Palaiologos was made guardian (ἐπίτροπος) of John IV and was promoted to* megas doux. *Akrop. stresses Michael's far-reaching popularity among all the people, including the Latins and Cumans in*

the army. On this, Pach.'s account agrees (I, 95–103; 129–131; 135.94–7), although Pach. describes also how Michael prepared the ground, making daily hand-outs of money. Furthermore, only Akrop. presents Michael as the 'reluctant' ruler ('he shrank from the undertaking'): see §76.11 below and §77.3. Note, too, Akrop.'s more expansive style in this section and reference to 'the impartial tribunal of Christ' and the 'Christian people'. Although Pach. was an eyewitness (I, 103.4–5; 11–12) to many of the events connected with Michael's rise to power, while Akrop. was absent from Asia Minor, this is not the only or even the most important reason for the differences in their accounts. See the Introduction, 71–5.

[1] Arsenios was not present from the beginning but arrived after Michael was made guardian and *megas doux*: *λείποντός μου* ('Testament': PG 140, 949C); Pach. (I, 95.14–97.20). The place of the two assemblies was Magnesia: see Blem., *Autobiographia* II, §80.

[2] A similar expression—'playing with nuts or casting pebbles'—is used by Chon. (229.72) of the young Alexios II, son of Manuel I, who was 11 years old when his father died.

[3] See above, §65, §69, where Akrop. states that after the Turks' defeat at Aksaray in 1256 they made treaties and agreed to pay the Mongols an annual tribute.

[4] See above, at §70.2 for a discussion of this form of the name.

[5] The despot Michael II had taken Albanon, Prilep, and Ochrid in 1257: see §68, §70, §72.

[6] He did not earlier mention the marriage of Helen to Manfred, son of Frederick II, king of Sicily. For the marriage, see Pach. I, 117.5–8. A western chronicle, the Anonymous of Trani, dates the marriage to June 1259. See Geanakoplos, 'The battle of Pelagonia', 104 and n. 16 for a discussion. Yet, it appears from Akrop.'s account that the marriage took place earlier, before 1259, since Akrop. refers to it in the context of the events of the late summer–early autumn of 1258. It may be that the arrangements for the marriage date to 1258, although the marriage did not take place until 1259. See Dendias, '*Ἑλένη Ἀγγελίνα Δούκαινα*, 227; Nicol, *Despotate*, 183 n. 6.

[7] Anna's marriage to William of Villehardouin, prince of Achaia, took place in 1258: Pach. I, 117.8–9; Greg. I, 71.22–72.1; Nicol, *Despotate*, 172–3. Below, at §79.2, in the context of a discussion of the events of 1259, Akrop. refers to the tie as 'already completed'. On William of Villehardouin, see above at §48.7.

[8] For Baldwin II, son of Peter of Courtenay, see above, §37. The Latins in Constantinople have played a relatively minor role in Akrop.'s narrative up until now. However, two sources give evidence for Nicaean–Latin fighting in the 1250s. In his *typikon* for the monastery of St Demetrios Michael

Palaiologos refers to his fighting the Latins from the Asiatic shore opposite Constantinople, during the reign of the emperor John, in c. 1253–4: see §64.3, 8. In addition, Pach. (I, 149.22–4) refers to a 'truce in the fighting directed against them' which Michael gave to the Latins soon after he came to the throne in 1259. See also below, §78.

[9] As *megas konostablos* Michael had Latins under him in the army under his command. See §64.2 and Pach. I, 37.5–7. Earlier also, at the time of Michael's trial for treason in 1253, the Latins spoke up in his defence: see at §50. See the Introduction, 98, and §59.20.

[10] These are the Cumans transferred to Asia Minor and baptized in the reign of John III: §40.5. Akrop. claims they have been hellenized by 1258. See the Introduction, 98, and §59.20.

[11] Akrop. is the only writer to suggest that Michael Palaiologos was reluctant to take power. By referring to Michael's 'no small qualms' Akrop. provides a defence for the charge that Michael usurped power. See further at §77.3: 'willingly or unwillingly', 'constrained'. Akrop. uses the topos of the 'reluctant ruler' not only to exonerate him from charges of usurpation but also to present him as an ideal ruler. See Weiler, 'The *rex renitens*', 1–42; the Introduction, 63. The oath 'he would be transgressing' is, according to Pach., his earlier oath to John III which in Pach.'s view was a more serious obstacle to his taking power than the oath to Theodore II. It was for the earlier oath that the bishops and patriarch produced a synodal *tomos*: Pach. I, 135.6–13. See Failler, 'Chronologie', 28 n. 24; 42–3. Akrop.'s use of 'supposedly' (τάχα) shows that he is not of the same opinion. He refers to the 'divine wreaths' for Michael, an image which imparts to him a saintly quality for accepting the imperial position.

77. In this way Michael Komnenos entered the contest for the imperial office. First they elevated him to the despotic rank and put the despot's fillet on his head.[1] After a very short time[2] had passed he was raised, willingly or unwillingly, to the imperial eminence, constrained[3] greatly by the prominent men and those for whom public affairs were a concern. Those in office and the other, better men of the armies seated him on the imperial shield[4] and proclaimed him imperially. But as it was necessary that he also be crowned with the imperial diadem, he went to the capital city of Bithynia, Nicaea, where he was crowned with the imperial diadem by the patriarch Arsenios.[5]

Since, of the emperor Theodore's apparently select men and magnates,[6] Karyanites, whom Theodore had as *protovestiarites*, was alive (he had perpetrated the murder of the forementioned *protovestiarios* and his brothers, for he had control of the Roman army at that time), the emperor Michael put him in prison so that he would not revolt. But he escaped and went to the lands of the

Persians, was seized by some Turcomans, stripped of his possessions, and murdered.[7] There was left then, of the great and famous, John Angelos, who was *protostrator* and was in the west with not a small part of the army under him. Him the emperor Theodore loved best after the *protovestiarios* and in dignities and in all other things he had, in a word, second place. The emperor dispatched some of his men to him in order to bring Angelos to him but on the way he was struck by the arrow of cowardice and died.[8] Such was the brave spirit of the men appointed by the emperor Theodore to be commanders of the Roman armies. These were his eminent men and first in honours. The rest were little men not worthy of much notice; that is why they were passed over, as despised men.[9]

Before the emperor Michael was crowned emperor he appointed his brother John Komnenos *megas domestikos*[10] and handed over to him the Roman army, sending him to the west against the renegade Michael.[11] With him he sent Alexios Strategopoulos and John Raoul, the eldest son of the *protovestiarios* Raoul,[12] and with them many others who knew how to command and to engage in battles as necessary. But when the emperor Michael was proclaimed emperor also,[13] he bestowed on his brother John Komnenos the honour of *sebastokrator*, sending to him, since he was in the west, the insignia of his rank.[14] Alexios Strategopoulos he made *megas domestikos*, while his brother Constantine, his brother by another mother, he honoured with the dignity of caesar,[15] and sent him to the region of Paphlagonia,[16] to inspect the cities there and the army and the fortresses.

§77 *Akrop. gives an account of Michael VIII's rise to the throne from 1258 to 1259 and the measures he took against the emperor Theodore's men upon becoming emperor. Akrop. names the murderer of the Mouzalons here, pointing the finger at Karyanites, while earlier he spoke in general of 'the crowd', 'the people': see §75.18, §77.7. In this passage, significant for understanding Akrop.'s attitudes towards Theodore II and Michael Palaiologos, Akrop. contrasts the fate of two men favoured by the emperor Theodore II, Karyanites and Angelos, whose characters Akrop. defames, with the men promoted by the emperor Michael. He further makes a tacit comparison of George Mouzalon, Theodore's* protovestiarios, *with Raoul*, protovestiarios *of Michael; Andronikos Mouzalon*, megas domestikos *of Theodore with John Komnenos*, megas domestikos *of Michael. A comparison of §60 with §77 shows that in 1259 four of the five most favoured men of Theodore II were dead, hunted down by those who had grievances with Theodore's reign, by Michael Palaiologos and his supporters. Of the five, only George Akropolites was still alive and safe in Michael II's prison in Epiros. See the Introduction, 64–5.*

[1] Akrop. gives no idea of the time which elapsed before Michael became despot. Pach. (I, 111.23–7) and Greg. (I, 71.2–9) imply that this took place soon after he became guardian and *megas doux*, possibly only some weeks later, in September 1258. But the 'short chronicle of 1352' gives a date of 13 November 1258. See Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* I, no. 5, p. 75; II, 197–8; Failler, 'Chronologie', 29–30. Greg. (I, 72.19–21), however, describes Michael as despot sending troops to the west to fight Michael II, 'shortly after the turn of the summer equinox'. This would date Michael's promotion to the rank of despot to late September–early October. Those who were in favour of his elevation, according to Pach. (I, 107.10–111.12), were especially those men who had been blinded by the emperor Theodore II: Strategopoulos, Philes and the Tornikes brothers. The ceremonial bestowal of the despotic rank depended on the reigning emperor who in this case was John IV. The patriarch assisted John in the ceremony: Pach. I, 111.23–7; Greg. I, 71.8–9. Akrop.'s use of the word 'fillet' (*ταινία*: Heis. p. 159.9) to describe the despot's headpiece gives the impression of a band, as does the description by Ps.-Kod. (ed. Verpeaux, 275.7–14). However, a contemporary coin showing the crowning of a despot by the emperor John III portrays a much more substantial crown. See S. Bendall, 'The coinage of Michael II Angelos of Epirus, 1231–1265', *The Numismatic Circular* 104/1 (1996), 3–5. On Akrop.'s descriptions of headpieces, see §11.15.

[2] The text has been emended to *μικρόν τε πάνυ* (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii).

[3] The proclamation is dated to 1 January 1259 by Pach. (I, 115.5–6; 137.7–8) and the 'short chronicle of 1352': Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* I, no. 6, p. 75; II, pp 198–9. See, too, the chrysobull issued by the emperor Michael in January 1259, confirming Iviron in its rights: *Actes d'Iviron* III, no. 58, 87–92. Akrop. says that Michael was elevated to emperor 'a very short time' after he became despot, a description which would be more apt if one accepts the date of November given by the 'short chronicle' for the despotic rank. But see §77.1. Akrop. continues to defend Michael's integrity by expressing his reluctance to gain higher office. See above, §76.11. Michael, in his typikon for the monastery of St Demetrios, says that God persuaded him to accept: ed. Grégoire, 453–5.

[4] The ceremony of Michael VIII's proclamation as emperor took place at Magnesia (Manisa): Pach. I, 139.23–141.1. As was the case with Theodore II, the elevation on the shield took place with the candidate seated: see §53.2. Only members of the army and (civil) office-holders are mentioned here as participants in the proclamation. Ps.-Kod., in the fourteenth century, mentions also members of the church taking part, holding the shield: ed. Verpeaux, 255.20–256.14.

[5] Arsenios says that 'not much time elapsed' between the proclamation (1 January 1259) and the coronation: 'Testament': PG 140, 949D. In the time between, Michael went to Philadelphia: Pach. I, 139.26–147.4. See Failler, 'Chronologie', 39–44, for the dating of the coronation. Theodore II had also gone to Philadelphia after his proclamation and for the same reason: to send an embassy to the sultan and make a display of the return to stability with a new emperor on the throne: see §53.4. Arsenios agreed to crown Michael in Nicaea with the stipulation that John IV should be crowned first: 'Testament': PG 140, 949D. At the last minute Michael brought pressure to bear so that he and his wife were crowned first while John was not given an imperial crown but merely a close-fitting cap decorated with gems: Pach. I, 145.27–147.4. Akrop. makes no reference at all to John IV here. The last mention of him is at §76, 'the emperor Theodore's son'. See also Failler, 'Chronologie', 21–2, for a thirteenth-century list of emperors which gives the duration of John IV's reign as 4 months and 15 days, from his father's death to the accession of Michael VIII in January 1259.

[6] Akrop. uses *μεγιστάνος* also at §65.

[7] Karyanites was first mentioned above (§60.10) at the time of his promotion to *protovestiarites* by Theodore II in 1255. Akrop. and Pach. (I, 89.29–91.9) have completely divergent stories about, and attitudes towards, Karyanites. Above, Akrop. names no single murderer of the Mouzalons: see §75.18, while Pach. refers to a certain Karoulos, a Latin mercenary, implying that Michael Palaiologos was behind him. Pach. shows no knowledge even of a rumour implicating Karyanites whom he calls a worthy and venerable man. He furthermore states that it was Karyanites' men (*οἱ . . . ἀμφὶ τὸν Καρυανίτην*) and not Karyanites himself who fled to the Turks, fearing that they might be the next target of the Mouzalons' killers. He reveals nothing about the fate of Karyanites himself. Akrop., on the other hand, by stating that Karyanites was in charge of the army 'at that time' appears to be attempting to divert suspicion of Michael Palaiologos' role in the murders. As *megas konostablos* Michael had charge of the Latin mercenaries. In addition, however, Akrop. discredits Karyanites further, by his allegation of a flight to the Turks. See the Introduction, 75 and n. 452.

[8] John Angelos' promotion to *protostrator* is mentioned above at §60.7. His death is not recorded by any other writer. Akrop. defames the man favoured greatly by Theodore II, implying that his fear and anxiety as to what Michael would do to him was so great that he died of it. I understand this to mean that he killed himself out of cowardice. For other references to (another) John Angelos, see above at §51, §58.

[9] With this sarcastic comment Akrop. contrasts implicitly Theodore II's choice men with Michael VIII's. In the next paragraph, Akrop. gives information about the 'little men' who were promoted by Michael VIII.

[10] John Komnenos Palaiologos is mentioned in the letter of 1256 of Niketas Karantenos to the abbot of St John's, Patmos. This letter reveals that he was sent to Rhodes in that year. It is not clear whether he was sent by the emperor Theodore on military or administrative business or into exile, since his brother Michael was at that time with the Turks: ed. Nystazopoulou, 289, 305. Under Michael he became *megas domestikos*, *sebastokrator*, and finally despot (see §82). Akrop. states that Michael made his brother John *megas domestikos* and sent him with an army to the west against Michael II, 'before he was crowned emperor'. This could refer to the period between his proclamation on 1 January 1259 and his coronation, sometime later. However, Pach. (I, 113.22–4) states that Michael was still despot (late 1258) when he made John *megas domestikos* and since, as despot, he did not have the authority to grant such a title, he made it appear that John IV conferred it: *τοῦ βασιλέως διδόντος δῆθεν*. After Michael became emperor, he arranged John's marriage to Constantine Tornikes' daughter and raised John to *sebastokrator*, second in the hierarchy after despot: Pach. I, 137.20–3; Failler, 'Chronologie', 33–4. If Michael was still despot when he made John *megas domestikos*, then he also sent John to the west against Michael II when he was despot. This latter point is confirmed by Greg. (I, 72.8–21). The start of the campaign can therefore be dated to the autumn of 1258: see §80; Nicol, 'The date of the battle of Pelagonia', 68–71.

[11] On this campaign which began in 1258, when Michael Palaiologos sent his brother John as *megas domestikos* to the west (see §77.10 for the date), and culminated in the Nicaean victory of 1259, see §79–§82.

[12] Alexios Strategopoulos held commands under both John III (§49.12) and Theodore II (§57) but Akrop. does not refer to any title he might have held before now. He was imprisoned by Theodore II (at §75.8) but made *megas domestikos* by Michael VIII (at §77.15). For the *protovestiarios* Alexios Raoul see above, §75.12. His four sons, of whom John was the eldest, were imprisoned by Theodore II. Michael VIII treated him differently.

[13] Although Akrop. uses '*ἀνηγορεύθη*' here he means the coronation, not proclamation, of Michael in early 1259. See Skout. (539.26–7) who substitutes *στεφηφορία*. See also §7.6, for this usage, and the Introduction, 52.

[14] The 'insignia' of the *sebastokrator* are the blue stockings and shoes, according to Ps.-Kod. (ed. Verpeaux, 147.9–148.21) in the mid-fourteenth century.

[15] Constantine Palaiologos was, according to Akrop. and Greg. (I, 72.16–17; 80.6), the son of Andronikos by a second (unknown) wife. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 161 and n. 2. He was made caesar when his brother John became

sebastokrator: Pach. I, 137.24–139.2. The title of caesar appears to have been bestowed rarely at Nicaea. Akrop. mentions no other holder before Constantine, with the exception of Leo Gabalas; the origin of his title is, however, unclear. On this, see §28.3.

[16] The army from Paphlagonia is mentioned several times above: §66, §71. See also §65.13 and the Introduction, 99, for the significance of Paphlagonia for the empire at this time.

78. When Michael Komnenos took hold of the imperial sceptre, he rescued and restored all those who, for whatever reason, had been imprisoned by the emperor Theodore or had been neglected in some other way, and received them with ample gifts; but also, in general, he was more generous to everyone in his reign, lavishly heaping money on them.[1] You could see the Roman people of whatever rank and whatever fortune and way of life filled with great delight and rejoicing at events. It was like someone coming out from the deepest darkness into the clearest light of the sun, or also from a storm into calm, or from winter to spring, or from a gale to stillness; he would have changed his condition from great sorrow to pleasure.[2] Thus, all were exulting and jumping for joy, having forgotten their previous grievous and bitter way of life.

Now, the Latins in Constantinople and Baldwin, who was ruling there supposedly as emperor, sent an embassy to the emperor asking for something excessive and almost absurd.[3] Being contemptuously disposed towards the emperor, as he had just begun his reign, they made heavy demands. And first they began with the city of Thessalonike, requesting that the emperor hand it over to them, as well as all the remaining land as far as Constantinople itself. The emperor, hearing such a request, made his response to them in a witty manner, saying, ‘This city happens to be my native city, for my father, whom you know, I mean the *megas domestikos*, governed there. But it was also in this city that he died and his body was buried there.[4] Therefore, how can it be right for this city to be outside my empire?’ Hearing this, the ambassadors pricked up their ears, thinking that the emperor might give them something of what they asked for and, changing their story, they said, ‘Then, O emperor, allow us to possess the rest, from Serres itself.’ The emperor replied, ‘Neither is this request a fitting one for me to fulfil, for it was in this city that I first began to govern territories under the late emperor, my uncle, and I first served as general in it, and I love the place as familiar ground. It is not right for me to let this city go either.’[5] But the ambassadors leapt from one place to another with ease; since they had nothing, they were contented[6] if they received something, as this would be a gain. They replied, ‘O emperor, give us from Voleron[7] to our territory.’ The emperor said, ‘I often hunted in those parts—I practically learned to hunt in those places—and I do not consider it meet to part with

this land where I want again to hunt and to take pleasure in the chase of animals.' 'Then what will you give to us?' the ambassadors said in response to the emperor. The emperor said,

> I will give you nothing. But if you want to have peace from me—
> (for you know me well and understand what war with me means;
> when I had the command of Bithynia and Tarsia,[8] I knew how
> to fight you)—I want the Latins in Constantinople to
> pay the Roman empire the half share from their *kommerkion*[9]
> and the same amount of revenue from their mint.[10] If you promise
> to give me this I will agree to make peace. If not, let there be fighting
> which, I daresay, will prove, with God's help, to the Romans' advantage.

Thus put to shame, the ambassadors of the Latins returned home to Constantinople having accomplished nothing.

§78 *In this section Akrop. relates events shortly after Michael VIII became emperor in 1259. The emperor's generosity to all ranks is given expression. The contrast with Theodore II upon his accession is implicit: see §52.25–8. Akrop. gives, in addition, an account of an embassy sent by Baldwin upon Michael's accession. Pach., the other contemporary source for these events, gives a very different picture both of Michael and of the embassy. See below, §78.3; Macrides, 'George Akropolites' rhetoric', 209–10; and the Introduction, 63–4.*

[1] Pach. (I, 137.18–139.19) likewise describes the broad appeal of Michael's acts of generosity: members of the senate were given titles and had their *pronoiai* increased; members of the army were given daily hand-outs and the hope that their children would enjoy their *pronoiai* in perpetuity; debts were cancelled, prisons opened, and poverty was alleviated. Pach. stresses not so much Michael's generosity, as the fact that he bought the support and enthusiasm of everyone, taking the money from the public treasury, and later revoking many of the privileges and gifts.

[2] Akrop. expresses the transition to Michael VIII's rule in metaphors of renewal, a topos applied most often in the context of passage from a turbulent, 'tyrannical', reign to a more peaceful, prosperous one. It was last used by Michael and Niketas Choniates of Isaac II Angelos after the reign of Andronikos I. See Chon., *Hist.* 356.29–30; *Orationes*, 89.1–2; M. Chon., 'Encomium for the emperor Isaac Angelos', ed. Lampros, I, 210.10–211.11. Although Akrop. may not be alluding to that specific example, his readers would have understood the contrast intended with Theodore II's rule. See §52.25–8 where he makes a prejudgement of Theodore's reign.

[3] If this embassy, sent by Baldwin, who ruled 'supposedly as emperor', is identical with the one mentioned by Pach. (I, 149.15–22), it took place early

in Michael's reign, shortly after Michael VIII returned to Nymphaion from Nicaea where he was crowned. Pach.'s account of the embassy is much shorter and apparently more substantial: I, 149.22–151.3. It reveals that the Nicaeans had been fighting the Latins and that Michael granted them a truce, promising a firmer settlement if they met certain conditions. However, he delayed fulfilling the terms of the treaty as he learned from the ambassadors who were 'Romans born of Romans' that more favourable conditions were in the offing for him. Only on one point are Pach.'s and Akrop.'s accounts similar: the ambassadors did ask for land. In Pach.'s version they were asking for themselves and the land they asked for was in Constantinople. Since Michael did not have any there, he confirmed their requests with chrysobulls should he one day have the means to fulfil them. Akrop. has chosen to turn the account into an amusing display of Michael VIII's wit and sagacity pitted against the Latins' silliness and weak position. Further, Akrop. uses the opportunity to recount Michael's entire career as well as his father's, thus drawing attention to Michael's past services to the empire all the while displaying his cleverness. See the Introduction, 63–4.

[4] Michael's father, Andronikos Palaiologos, died in Thessalonike sometime between 1248 and 1251/2 (see §46.6 and §49.8, 20 for the date), after his appointment there (1246). A funeral oration by Jacob, archbishop of Ochrid, says that he was buried in Thessalonike but later reburied in Asia Minor: see §46.6.

[5] Michael held a military command at Serres and Melnik from 1246: see §46.4.

[6] Bases proposes the reading *ἠγάπων* (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii) which I have adopted.

[7] For the theme of Voleron, see §25.9.

[8] Michael refers to the time he held a military command in Bithynia and the Optimates region, from 1253/4 until his flight to the Turks in 1256: see §64.8. For his mention of fighting the Latins at that time, see also his typikon for the monastery of St Demetrios: ed. Grégoire, 451–3; Pach. I, 43.6–8. Tarsia is the region to the east of the Sangarios river, opposite Nikomedeia, in the Optimates theme: Chon. 245.80–1; *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 235.

[9] The *kommerkion* is the tax on imports, exports and commercial transactions, levied at 10 per cent until the mid-fourteenth century. The word can also mean trade, merchandise, the place where the trade takes place. See *ODB*, s.v. *kommerkion*; H. Antoniades-Bibicou, *Recherche sur les douanes à Byzance* (Paris, 1963), 102–10.

[10] The *chrysepseteion* (*χρυσ(ο)εψητεῖον*) is related to, or identical with, the *χρυσοχοεῖον*, *χρυσιοπλύσια*, *χαραγή* or mint housed in the Great Palace in Constantinople: Chon. 347.44–50; Nicholas Mesarites, *Die Palastrevolution*

des Johannes Komnenos, ed. A. Heisenberg, Programm des Königlichen alten Gymnasiums zu Würzburg für das Studienjahr 1906/7 (Würzburg, 1907), 25.32–26.20; Oikonomides, *Les Listes de préséance*, 317. The 'revenue' (*εἴσοδος*) from the *chrysepseteion* would be the money charged for presenting bullion to the mint to be melted down, refined and refashioned into coins or luxury objects. Hendy (*Studies*, 259–60, 389–90) argues from this passage, and also on the basis of evidence for use of the mint by private individuals, that a fee would have been charged. For a discussion, see also Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 662.

79. The emperor sent an embassy to the renegade Michael through Theodore Philes,[1] who had been blinded by the emperor Theodore. The embassy was conciliatory and the emperor ceded to the renegade many of the towns and territories, soliciting goodwill from him, but he asked for the return of a few others which he could not afford to overlook. The renegade was unyielding to what he heard and deaf to the discussions. Not only did he not receive the embassy, but he also gave replies which were not fitting. For not only the marriage alliance with the king of Sicily puffed him up, but also that with the prince of Achaia, William; he had already formed this kinship tie as well. Consequently he had big ideas and spoke arrogantly.[2] Theodore Philes was greatly distressed by the discussions and troubled by the replies and so he returned to the emperor, having said this to the renegade, 'I know that you are unthinking and that is why you are giving voice to unseemly remarks. But know that you will soon be tried by imperial strength and Roman force and you will repent when it is too late'. When he had said this, he returned to the emperor, condemning Michael's great folly in not being willing to satisfy even the small request of the emperor to release Constantine Chabaron[3] and myself, the author, immediately; Chabaron, because he had been brought up with the emperor and had often fought with him on campaign; me, because I was related to the emperor by marriage and my wife[4] was crying pitifully and prostrating herself at the monarch's[5] feet. And this, although the emperor had released from prison more than 20 men whom the emperor had taken captive in the battle at Vodena and had sent to the emperor Theodore;[6] some of them were relatives of the renegade, while others were the best in the army and among those distinguished in birth. This is how the embassy to the renegade fared.

The emperor also sent an embassy to the king of Sicily, Manfred, the renegade's son-in-law, through the *epi tou kanikleiou*, Nikephoros Alyates,[7] whom Manfred kept with him for nearly two years. But how could he fulfil any of the emperor's wishes when he was absolutely bound to the renegade Michael and was possessed by the dream of greater gain? The emperor likewise sent an embassy to the prince of Achaia. But he too, emboldened

by the marriage alliance with the renegade, and expecting many benefits to come to him from it, held the discussions of no account.

§79 *Akrop. is the only author to mention the embassies to Michael II, Manfred of Sicily, and William of Achaia which can be dated by their position here in Akrop.'s narrative to early 1259, after Michael's coronation: see Nicol, 'The date of the battle of Pelagonia', 69; Failler, 'Chronologie', 32–4. Philes and Alyates, Michael's ambassadors to Michael II and Manfred, were men who had suffered mutilation under Theodore II, as Akrop. makes explicit here in the case of Philes, and above in the case of Alyates (§75.13). Michael VIII's choice of these men as ambassadors brought to the attention of the empire's enemies or potential adversaries the change which had occurred in imperial authority.*

[1] For Philes, see above, §75.10.

[2] Whereas Akrop. concentrates on the marriage alliances that Michael II contracted in 1258–9 with Manfred of Sicily and in 1258 with William of Villehardouin (see §76.6, 7), as an explanation for Michael II's arrogant behaviour, Pach. (I, 115.8–117.4) states that Michael II was aiming to conquer Constantinople and be proclaimed emperor, as the man best suited to the throne by his ancestry. He compared the situation in the east after the death of Theodore II, with that after 1204 when his uncle, Theodore Komnenos Doukas, succeeded in obtaining the imperial crown. See the Introduction, 53, for the prominent role kinship plays in Akrop.'s explanations.

[3] Chabaron had been appointed governor at Albanon by the emperor Theodore II in 1256. Michael II had succeeded in winning Albanon and Chabaron through his sister-in-law Maria Sphrantzaina who seduced Chabaron: see §68.1, 2.

[4] Akrop.'s wife's name, Eudokia, is known from their son's reference to prayers for her at the monastery of the Anastasis in Constantinople, restored by George Akropolites: ed. Delehaye, 279–84, here 282. Although George calls his wife a relation of Michael and Michael refers to George as his *gener* in letters to pope Gregory X in 1274 (Roberg, *Die Union*, 232, 246) and as *gambros/gener* in his treaty with Venice of 1277 (MM III, 96; TTh III, 149; Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus*, 300–4), their precise relationship is unknown since *gambros* indicates kinship by marriage to a female relation—daughter, sister, niece or cousin: Binon, 'À propos d'un prostagma inédit d'Andronic III Paléologue', 388–92, esp. 391–2. George and Eudokia would have had to have been married by 1256, the date George accompanied Theodore II on the campaign from which he returned late in 1259. Kourouses calculates that their eldest son Constantine was born in the 1250s. See Kourouses, '*Ὁ λόγιος οἰκουμενικὸς πατριάρχης Ἰωάννης ΙΓ ὁ Γλυκύς*',

297–405, here 338–40. A date for their marriage in the early 1250s is therefore possible. See the Introduction, 18.

[5] Akrop.'s use of 'monarch' to refer to Michael VIII here and at §81, §83, §84.7 leaves no doubt that John IV (last mentioned at §76) was not considered to have a share in imperial power. See §77.5.

[6] Michael Palaiologos fought at the battle of Vodena in 1257 under Theodore II, killing an illegitimate son of Michael II, called Theodore, and taking captive 'more than 20 of the elite men': see §71.7, 8.

[7] For Alyates see §49.24, §75.13.

80. The emperor, as we mentioned before,[1] sent his brother the *sebastokrator* to the west against the renegade, entrusting to him the forces and their generals, and ordering him to keep advancing until he should encounter the renegade's army. The *sebastokrator* John acted in accordance with the order. The renegade Michael was encamped with his wife and his retainers in the area of Kastoria.[2] Suddenly the report reached him that the Roman armies were crossing the valley at Vodena, advancing against them. Hearing this message and receiving no small fright in their hearts, they rushed to flight and set all their men in motion. Since it was night and a person could not see where he was going, many fell victim to the road, as if it were a sword. Theodore Petraliphas,[3] who was the brother of the renegade Michael's wife, mounted his horse too boldly; as he was in a precipitous place, he and his horse were cast down and both perished. They drew back then as far as their own boundaries, namely the Pyrrenaia mountains which separate Old and New Epiros from our Hellenic land.[4]

When this had happened to them, the *sebastokrator*, finding the territory without a defending force, took advantage of the opportunity, and attacked the towns there. First he went to Ochrid, known to everyone as the archiepiscopal see of Bulgaria, accompanied by its archbishop Constantine Kabasilas, who had been detained by the emperor Theodore.[5] He had been suspected by the latter of not being true to the imperial regime, for his brothers John and Theodore were with the renegade Michael; Theodore was among Michael's prominent men, while John was master over practically all his affairs, administering both public and household matters.[6] It was for these reasons, as we said, that the emperor Theodore did not have confidence in the bishop. But the emperor Michael was freer in these matters and depended on God in most, or all, of his acts.[7] He gave the archbishop freedom to go to his see, and Kabasilas accompanied the *sebastokrator*. When they came to Ochrid, as we said, the *sebastokrator* set up siege engines against them, while the archbishop undertook to have them give way by means of words. In a short time Ochrid was taken by them.

When the *sebastokrator* had arranged affairs there well, he hastened to Deavolis and resolved[8] to bring the town of Deavolis to terms with the use of mechanical contrivances of every kind. He prescribed these and set up siege towers and made all kinds of engines of war and carried out continuous attacks, choosing to bring about the conquest of the town in all kinds of ways. Things turned out according to his plan for many inside the town were killed; not a few were struck by arrows and wounded; others showed cowardice (for the western race[9] is by nature cowardly in regard to defending towns) and they surrendered this town of Deavolis[10] to the *sebastokrator*. All the territory around these towns, namely Prespa, Pelagonia, Soskos, Molyskos,[11] came under the authority of the Roman forces and was subjected to them. For such are the inhabitants of the western parts, readily yielding to all potentates. In this way they avoid death and preserve most of their wealth.[12] These events happened during the spring.[13]

§80 *Akrop. gives an account of the campaign of 1259, resuming his narrative from §77, where he mentioned that Michael Palaiologos as despot sent his brother John to the west, along with Alexios Strategopoulos and John Raoul. See §77.10, 11 for the date: late September–early October 1258. Akrop. makes no reference to any action against Michael II until after Michael Palaiologos' assumption of imperial power (1259) and the failed embassy to Michael II of 1259 (§79). The start of the offensive of the Nicaean troops appears to date to January 1259: see §80.3. Fighting continued into the summer of that year. See §82. The decisive victory of the Nicaean troops over Michael II's western allies is called the 'battle of Pelagonia' in modern historical writing. Akrop., however, does not specify a single battle site (see §81.8), nor do Pach. and Greg., who differ in their accounts from Akrop. with regard to the reasons for the Nicaean victory. See Geanakoplos, 'The battle of Pelagonia', 101–41; Failler, 'Chronologie', 33–9. In his account, Akrop. emphasizes the use of tactics recommended by Michael Palaiologos to his brother, and the lack of staying power of the 'inhabitants of the western parts' (§80.9, 12). Individual elements of his account correspond to Pach. and Greg. The battle was decisive for the future of the Nicaean empire, opening the way to the recovery of Constantinople, as Akrop.'s account makes clear: see §83.*

In this part of his narrative, Akrop. expresses the opposition between 'Nicaea' and 'Epiros' in strong terms of identification which separate 'us' from 'them': 'ours', 'our men', 'our Hellenic land', as opposed to the 'western race', terms usually applied to the distinction between the Byzantines and the Latins. On this see Angold, 'Byzantine "Nationalism" and the Nicaean empire', 49–70; the Introduction, 94–7.

[1] §77.14.

[2] Kastoria, as well as Ochrid and Deavolis (Devol) which the Nicaean troops proceeded to conquer (see at §80.7, 10), had been in Michael II's control until 1252/3 when all three places went over to the emperor John: see §49. In 1257 they came under Michael II's control again: §72. For Michael's wife, Theodora, the daughter of John Petraliphas, see above, §49.3, §63.25. Akrop. refers to Michael II's 'retainers' (*oikeioi*) both here and below at §81. For this term, used to describe men attached to the emperor or another lord by ties of service and loyalty, see above, §38.16.

[3] At Kastoria, with Michael II, was Theodore Petraliphas, brother of Theodora, Michael II's wife. He had defected to the emperor John III in 1252 (§49.27) bringing with him Kastoria and Deavolis. From this account it appears that he returned to Michael II's side, probably in 1257. With Petraliphas' death Kastoria, but also Deavolis, fell to the Nicaean troops: see at §80.10 below. The *Partitio* lists them together, showing that they were one administrative unit: ed. Carile, 221.110. Petraliphas' death, and therefore this incident, can be dated more precisely to January 1259. In a document of that date he is referred to as deceased (*ἐκεῖνος*): *Actes d'Iviron* III, no. 58, p. 92.87.

[4] Old Epiros extended from the Ambracian Gulf north to the Akrokeraunian promontory, New Epiros from that point to Dyrrachion: Soustal, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia*, 37, 47–8; Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros, 1267–1479*, 1, 10. For Old Epiros see also above, §8.12. Akrop.'s statement that the Pyrrenaia mountains separate Old and New Epiros from 'our Hellenic land' indicates that these are the Pindos mountains. In this passage men are fleeing from Kastoria across the mountains; below at §82.4, men at Neopatras cross the Pyrrenaia to get to Arta and Ioannina. Akrop. appears, therefore, to give the name Pyrrenaia to the whole of the Pindos. See, also, Soustal, *Nikopolis und Kephallenia*, 239. For 'Pyrrenaia' see also §82. 'Our Hellenic land' refers to the ancient theme of Hellas: Pach. I, 271.22–6: *τὴν ἰδίως Ἑλλάδα λεγομένην*.

[5] Ochrid, under the control of Michael II in 1246 (§46), came under John III's authority in 1252–3, along with Deavolis and Kastoria (§49.27). It remained in Nicaean control until 1257 when Akrop. visited it as newly appointed *praitor* (§68). From this passage it is clear that Ochrid was no longer Nicaean in 1259. Constantine Kabasilas was archbishop of Ochrid at least by the time of the reign of Theodore II (1254–8), as this passage indicates. He succeeded Jacob who occupied the see until at least 1248. For him, see §46. According to Skout. (542.27–8), the emperor Theodore held Kabasilas 'in the east'. After his release by Michael VIII and the Nicaean reconquest of Ochrid, Kabasilas remained in the see at least until 1262/3, according to the last reference to him, a dedicatory inscription on an icon: V. J. Djurić, *Icônes de Yougoslavie* (Belgrade, 1961), 83–4, no. 2 and pl. II. He is portrayed as a saint in frescoes in Ochrid from the late thirteenth century:

R. Ljubinković, 'Les influences de la vie politique contemporaine sur la décoration des églises d'Ohrid', *Actes du XII^e congrès international byzantin* III (1964), 224. An 'office' for Saint Constantine Kabasilas also refers to his 'exile': C. G. Nichorites, '*Ἀνέκδοτη ἑλληνικὴ ἀκολουθία πρὸς τιμὴν τοῦ ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἀχριδῶν Κωνσταντίνου Καβάσιλα*', *Ἀφιέρωμα στήν μνήμη τοῦ Σωτήρη Κίσσα* (Thessalonike, 2001), 345–72, esp. 359, 363.

Kabasilas' career is problematic. He is thought to have held three or possibly four bishoprics in succession: Stroummitza, Dyrrachion, Ochrid, and possibly Grevena. See Laurent, *Corpus des sceaux* V/1 (no. 881, p. 689), V/2 (no. 1509, pp 357–9), V/3 (no. 1777, pp 124–5). If one and the same Constantine Kabasilas held all three/four positions, his career was highly uncanonical. On this problem see Pitsakis, '*Κωνσταντίνος Καβάσιλας, Μητροπολίτης Δυρραχίου, Ἀρχιεπισκόπος Ἀχρίδος: Προσωπογραφικὰ προβλήματα*', 151–229. It does, however, now appear certain that the same Kabasilas was metropolitan of Dyrrachion (before 1235) and archbishop of Ochrid (from at least 1249). See Pitsakis, '*Personae non sunt multiplicandae sine necessitate*: nouveaux témoignages sur Constantine Kabasilas', 491–513. As metropolitan of Dyrrachion he addressed a series of liturgical and canonical questions to Chomatenos and John of Kitros: J. Darrouzès, 'Les réponses canoniques de Jean de Kitros', *REB* 31 (1973), 319–31. As bishop of Stroummitza and archbishop of Ochrid he composed hymns for local saints. See *PLP*, no. 10097; *LThK* 5 (1996), s.v. Kabasilas.

[6] John and Theodore are not known from any other source. Other contemporary members of the family are attested. A Demetrios, deacon of the metropolis of Dyrrachion, is mentioned in a document of 1246: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, '*ΔΥΡΡΑΧΗΝΑ*', *BZ* 14 (1905), 568–71.

[7] For this characterization of Michael VIII, omitted by Skout. (543.2–4), see the discussion in the Introduction, 55, 64. Michael himself makes the same assertion in his typikon for St Demetrios: ed. Grégoire, 455.

[8] Heis.'s text reads *ἐβεβούλητο* (p. 167.8). Charitonides has suggested the emendation *ἐβεβούλευτο* ('*Σύμμικτα Κριτικά*', 85–7) which I have adopted. See also Heis. p. 168.2 for this verb.

[9] Akrop. means the Epirots: see the Introduction, 94–5, and at §80.12.

[10] On Deavolis, see §80.3 above.

[11] Prespa, Pelagonia (Bitola), Soskos and Molyskos, all to the east of Ochrid and Deavolis, are referred to in the sources not only as towns but also as homonymous regions (*provincia*, *χώρα*), confirming Akrop.'s usage here, 'all the territory around the towns'. See *Partitio*, ed. Carile, 221. The sites of Molyskos and Soskos are unknown. Molyskos, mentioned in the *Partitio* (ed. Carile, 221.104) and in the chrysobull of Alexios III for the Venetians (1198), may be between Pelagonia and Vodena: Kravari, *Macédoine*

occidentale, 46 map, 302. For Soskos, near Ostrovos, see Skyl. (353.59–60, 364.67); Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 332–3. For Prespa and Pelagonia see above, §68.

[12] For these characterizations of the subjects of the Komneno-Doukai, the 'western race' (§80.9), the 'inhabitants of the western parts', see also Pach. I, 35.18–20, 191.7–9.

[13] Akrop. describes the first phase of the campaign as having taken place in the 'spring' (1259). However, the start of the campaign was January. See above, §80.3.

81. Since the renegade Michael saw that things were already looking as if they would not turn out well for him, he resolved to resist the imperial forces and 'he put every contrivance in motion and left no stone unturned', as the proverb goes.[1] He assembled his retainers, simply everyone all together.[2] He obtained also not a small alliance from his son-in-law, the king of Sicily, for they were 400 knights in number,[3] each an eminent member of his race, clad in strong arms and mounted on stately and high-spirited horses. His other son-in-law, the prince of Achaia, collected his entire army and personally provided the alliance for his father-in-law; he himself led the infinitely great army[4] which came from the Frankish race and from the Roman inhabitants of Achaia and the Peloponnesos, over whom he ruled; most of them were of the race of the Lakonians.[5]

A very large army was assembled and they set themselves in motion against the monarch's brother, the *sebastokrator* John. But he—for he had good advice from his brother the emperor[6]—struck back at his adversaries strategically. With armoured forces that were equipped with breastplates, he held the strongest places, while the lighter foot-soldiers—for whom it was easy to move as they were nimbler—he ordered to join battle with the enemy in the plains. Some were Scyths, others were Turks; many were also of the Roman race, for whom archery was a way of life.[7] They engaged the enemy, striking them with arrows from a distance. They began to attack the enemy from a place whose name is Borilla Longos.[8] They allowed them neither to march freely in the daytime nor to rest at night. For they clashed with them in the day when they were watering their horses—if someone should distance himself to water his horse—and they fell upon them also on the road and, drawing near their carts and beasts of burden, they plundered their loads, while those who were guarding yielded. When they had done this many times they were driven to considerable boldness against the enemy, so that they plundered from them whatever there was, taking it from their hands. The army of the rebel Michael was cast down by this also and was reduced to no small fear, for it gave up practically all hope of deliverance.

Perforce and with difficulty they [Michael II's army] passed by Stanon, Soskos, and Molyskos.[9] It was their aim to reach the town of Prilep in order to preserve it. When they arrived there, they scattered; each took his own counsel to run for his life with as much strength as he had. The renegade Michael with his son Nikephoros[10] and a moderate number of men in whom he was accustomed to confide his actions mounted their horses in the night and fled. They knew the road well. But already with the dawn of day when the commanders of the troops learned that Michael had fled, they also turned to flight.[11] Then the Roman army[12] and the better men in command of it, and John, the illegitimate son of the renegade,[13] approached the *sebastokrator* John, and gave him their hands[14] and rendered the oath to the emperor. The prince of Achaia and those with him scattered, each to a different place. The prince was captured at Kastoria; he lay hidden under some hay and was recognized by one of the soldiers by means of his teeth, for his front teeth were very large and protruded from his gums,[15] and he was taken captive to the emperor. The best men of his divisions and his relations, Anselm of Toucy[16] and Geoffrey of Karitana,[17] and many others of the notable men were captured, some at Platamon,[18] others at some other place, and were led away captive to the emperor. The allied force sent to the renegade by Manfred, the king of Sicily, numbering 400 men,[19] as we said, with their arms and their horses, was taken by four men, one of whom was the *megas domestikos*, Alexios Strategopoulos; another was Nikephoros Rimpsas,[20] who drew his descent from Turks but had become a most orthodox Christian.[21] The other two men were the undistinguished sort.[22] They sent these captives to the emperor.[23] Such a victory did our men accomplish with imperial counsel that its fame visited all the ends of the earth. The sun has seen few such victories. At that time our men subjected every town and every territory.[24]

§81 *In this section the second phase of the campaign is described which modern historiography calls the 'battle of Pelagonia' but which Akrop. neither describes as a battle nor locates at Pelagonia: see §81.8. Akrop. gives no chronological indications here. Events related in §81–2 took place sometime between the spring of 1259 and the autumn–winter 1260 (see §83). Holobolos' oration addressed to the emperor Michael in 1265 (ed. Treu, 40–3; for the date see Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople—1261?', 13–41) is a source for the battle, as is Michael Palaiologos' typikon for St Demetrios (1282) (ed. Grégoire, 455–7; for the date see Dennis,* Byzantine monastic foundation documents III, *1240 n. 1). See §81.4, 6, 24 below for points of agreement with Akrop.'s narrative.*

[1] *CPG* II, p. 210.

[2] Demetrakos, *Μέγα Λεξικόν*, VIII, 6788, gives *συλλέγδην* (= *συλλήβδην*) as an *hapax* in Akrop.

[3] Sanudo confirms that Manfred supplied 400 cavalry: ed. Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes*, 107. However, Pach. (I, 117.9–10) gives a figure of 3000 men. See Geanakoplos, 'The battle of Pelagonia', 122 and n. 105.

[4] Akrop. stresses William's participation, saying that he 'personally' (*δι' ἑαυτοῦ*) fulfilled the alliance. Pach. (I, 117.10–11) and Michael Palaiologos, in his typikon for St Demetrios, likewise make this point (ed. Grégoire, 455). For the background to Michael II's alliance with his sons-in-law, see Geanakoplos, 'The battle of Pelagonia', 101–18.

[5] The Bonn edn of Akrop. reads 'Latins' for 'Lakonians': see critical apparatus, Heis. 168.16; cf. *Annales*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1836), 180.5. The reading of 'Latins' is unlikely to be correct, however, as Akrop. has just spoken of the 'Frankish race', contrasting it with the Romans in the army. Akrop. is referring rather to the inhabitants of the southeast Peloponnese who are mentioned again later in the reign of Michael VIII: Pach. (I, 253.5–10; 277.20; II, 401.26–403.1; 401 n. 6) relates that Michael brought Lakonians (who, he says, are also called 'Tzakones') to Constantinople because of their great experience in war and he put them to use both within and outside the city. Although Akrop. does not call the Lakonians Tzakones, he does use the word 'race' (*genos*) of them, as does Gregory of Cyprus for the Tzakones (ed. S. Eustratiades, '*Ἐπιστολαὶ πατριάρχου Γρηγορίου τοῦ Κύπρου*', *ΕΦ* 4 (1909), no. 166, 126–8, here 128. This is perhaps because the Lakonians were distinguishable as a group from a specific area with special military ability. See Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia*, 49–50, 95; Bartusis, *The late Byzantine army*, 45–6; cf. S. C. Caratzas, *Les Tzacones* (Berlin, 1976).

[6] Michael's typikon (ed. Grégoire, 455) for St Demetrios likewise stresses the large size of the enemy army. The use of strategy by the Nicaeans is emphasized and described in some detail by Akrop., perhaps because this was the only way to fight such a numerically superior force. Holobolos (ed. Treu, 40.11–22) praises the emperor Michael for the encouragement and advice on tactics and formations which he gave to his army in letters sent from the east.

[7] The presence of Turkish and Cuman mercenaries in the Nicaean army is confirmed by Holobolos (ed. Treu, 40.9) and the Greek chronicle of the Morea (ed. Kalonaros, 206.17). Michael Palaiologos mentions also 'the Mysians in Europe', a reference to Bulgarians (ed. Grégoire, 457). The Romans in the army 'for whom archery was a way of life' are presumably the inhabitants from the area around Philadelphia, renowned for their skills of archery: see above, §53.3. However, Pach. (I, 173.4–5; 259.24–261.1) in another context makes reference to Nicaean archers.

[8] Akrop. says that the fighting began at 'Boril's Wood' but he goes on to describe a series of skirmishes on the road rather than a confrontation of two armies on a battlefield. The exact location of *Βορίλλα Λόγγος*, literally 'Boril's Wood', and, therefore, of the 'battle of Pelagonia' is not known, although it is believed to be near Pelagonia. Furthermore, the Greek and French versions of the Chronicle of the Morea locate the battle at Pelagonia: see Geanakoplos, 'The battle of Pelagonia', app. A, 136 and n. 6. Skyl. (355.19) refers to a fortress called 'Longos' in the vicinity of Kastoria but place names containing the Slav lŭg are not rare: see Vasmer, *Die Slaven*, 40, 77, 93, 106.

[9] Stanon is mentioned in the *Partitio* and by Chon. (535.90–2) in connection with Prilep and Pelagonia: ed. Carile, 221.105; D. A. Zakythinos, '*Μελέται*', *EEBS* 21 (1951), 209. Its exact position is unknown. See Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 42 and n. 87, 335. Soskos and Molyskos were taken by the Nicaean forces before the 'battle of Pelagonia': see above at §80.11. This is why Michael II's army is described here as passing by those places 'with difficulty' on their way to Prilep, the largest town in the vicinity which had not been taken yet. See Kravari, *Macédoine occidentale*, 46 map.

[10] For Nikephoros, see above, §49.2, §63.25, §74.14.

[11] Akrop. gives a picture of desertion based on fear of the Nicaean forces and their tactics. The story is more complicated, according to Pach. (I, 115–21) and Greg. (I, 73–5). See §82.13 below for Pach. whose story involves John, 'the illegitimate son of the renegade', also known as John the 'Bastard'. Greg. says that Michael II fled when a Nicaean falsely warned him that his Latin allies had defected to the Nicaean side.

[12] Akrop. is referring to the men fighting for the Komneno-Doukai who were not foreign allies. In this case he applies the name 'Roman' to them, possibly because they went over to the Nicaean side, although earlier (§80.12) he called them 'the inhabitants of the western parts'.

[13] For John Doukas, also known as John the Bastard, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 97. In Akrop.'s version of events John surrenders to the Nicaean army whereas, according to Pach. (I, 117–21), John defected to the Nicaean side because of an attack on his honour by William of Achaia. Sanudo gives a similar account: ed. Hopf, 107. For John, see also §82.

[14] This is a rare description in Akrop. to a gesture: 'they gave him their hands'. It is accompanied by oath taking. A possible parallel can be seen in Nikephoros Bryennios' account of the change of sides of the westerners, 'Franks', who had been in the service of Alexios Komnenos but went over to the rebel Bryennios: 'they put their hands in his, as is their ancestral *(patrios)* custom and gave their pledges' (ed. Gautier, 275.15–18). The scene is related also by Anna Komnene with a variant: 'they gave their right hands to him' (1.6.1). If John's gesture is the same as that of the 'Franks' recounted above and

has the same meaning, it may be that this western custom was taken over by him (and his father) in their association with westerners at this battle and previously.

[15] Pach. I, 121.15–16, says he hid in a bush. Only Akrop. mentions his large teeth. See the Introduction, 46, for Akrop.'s interest in physical characteristics.

[16] Anselm of Toucy is the grandson of Theodore Branas and Agnes-Anna, daughter of Louis VII of France. Anselm's father, Narjot of Toucy, was married to a daughter of Branas and Agnes. See Aubry, 885.21–3; *The Chronicle of Morea*, ed. Schmitt, 5241; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 220; Geanakoplos, 'The battle of Pelagonia', 138. Anselm was related to William of Achaia through his sister who was married to the prince. See also §83.3.

[17] Geoffrey, lord of Karitana or Karytaina, is Geoffrey of Brieres, nephew of William of Achaia. See *The Chronicle of Morea*, ed. Schmitt, 3832–55; Longnon, *L'Empire latin*, 221. Karitana is the main fortress in the mountainous region of the Peloponnese called Skorta, located on either side of the middle course of the Alpheos river: Bon, *La Morée franque* I, 105–6.

[18] The wide dispersal of the army is shown by the fact that William was captured at Kastoria while other notable men were taken at Platamon, on the Thermaic Gulf: see above §46.

[19] In his oration addressed to Michael VIII, Holobolos makes special mention of 30 captives, the leaders of the army: ed. Treu, 42.10. According to him, the majority of the captives were imprisoned in Thessalonike: 40.35–41.3.

[20] Rimpsas is mentioned again in 1272/3 at the head of a Turkish contingent at the battle of Neopatras: Pach. II, 425.18; for the date see Failler, 'Chronologie', II, 189–92. A Rimpsas, *pansebastos* and *praitor tou demou* is mentioned in a document of 1286 as one of the *oikeioi* of the emperor who helps in a dispute of the monastery of Lembos (MM IV, 276). For this title, honorific by the thirteenth century, see R. Guilland, 'Études sur l'histoire administrative de l'empire byzantin: le prêteur du peuple, *ὁ πραίτωρ τοῦ δήμου*', *RESEE* 7 (1969), 81–9, here 81–2. The Rimpsas of the 1286 document is treated by the *PLP*, fasc. 10 (nos 24291, 24292) as a different person from the man mentioned by Akrop. and Pach.

[21] I have adopted Charitonides' (Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii) suggestion of *ὀρθοδοξότατος*, the reading of ms. H, in place of *ὀρθότατος*. Akrop.'s use of *Τοῦρκοι* here and above at §71.7, §81 is inconsistent with his more usual classicizing *Πέρσαι*. See the Introduction, 51 n. 313.

[22] See above at §49.22 where Akrop. uses the same word, '*ἀνώνυμοι*' in the sense of 'untitled'.

[23] See §81.4 above.

[24] Pach. (I, 151.5–17) gives a long list of conquered towns stretching from Kanina and Dyrrachion in the west to Vodena in the east and Trikala and Neopatras in the south. See also Michael Palaiologos in his typikon for St Demetrios: ed. Grégoire, 455.

82. The *sebastokrator* John passed through Thessaly, and when he had fortified the towns and fortresses in it, he encamped at Neopatras;[1] he had with him John, the illegitimate son[2] of the renegade Michael. The *megas domestikos* Alexios Strategopoulos and John Raoul[3] crossed the Pyrrenaia mountains and proceeded to Arta, leaving in Ioannina a division of the army to besiege the town. They then occupied Arta.[4]

There I met with them. I conferred with them for a few days, then made arrangements and departed from Arta,[5] leaving the people there no longer well-disposed to our men, for the men of the armies did not treat them well. It was for this reason that that most renowned victory which shone upon the Romans was reversed in a short time. So then I went straight to the *sebastokrator* John, the emperor's brother who was at Neopatras and, having stayed with him a few days, I started on the road leading to the emperor.

The illegitimate son of the renegade Michael, John, who was with the *sebastokrator*, plotted rebellion with a few others. When the *sebastokrator* John advanced against the Latins, passed by Levadia and plundered Thebes,[6] John made manifest the faithlessness which he had contrived and, escaping with some others, he went to the renegade Michael, his father. Disturbed by the sudden turn of events, Michael had nowhere to go, but he and his son Nikephoros and his wife[7] and some of his men embarked on boats, and they passed their time on the sea; he had as a base the surrounding islands, that is, Leukas and the islands of Kephallenia.[8] But when his illegitimate son John went to him, as was mentioned, he recovered from his torpor and, shaking off his fear, he went to Arta. When he arrived there, since he found all the inhabitants devoted to him and his side held the town of Vouditza,[9] gathering together those who were there, he drove our men outside the boundaries of Arta. But he also drove the besiegers of Ioannina far from Ioannina. This then was the beginning of bad times for Roman affairs. The good achievements which had been brought about by imperial counsel were reduced to almost nothing, or very little, because of the disobedience and lack of discipline of those in command.

The emperor's brother, the *sebastokrator* John, and John's father-in-law, Constantine Tornikes,[10] left the battle, returning to the monarch who was at Lampsakos and was staying there. The emperor honoured[11] the *sebastokrator* John with the rank of despot, as if giving him a favour in return for the victory, and so that he might be equal to the people who fought him, a despot

contending against despots. John's father-in-law Constantine Tornikes who was *megas primmikerios*, he honoured with the dignity of *sebastokrator*. But he also named his own brother Constantine *sebastokrator* in place of caesar. The insignia of the *sebastokratores* differed in this: the emperor's brother had gold-woven eagles attached to his blue shoes, while Tornikes wore shoes bare of these.[12] The monarch also honoured Alexios Strategopoulos, the *megas domestikos*, making him caesar[13] by proxy, conferring the honour on him by dispatch. These things took place in this way.

§82 *Akrop. gives an account of the aftermath of the 'battle of Pelagonia' in 1259, including his own release from captivity at Arta and Michael II's resurgence with the support of his son, John 'the Bastard'. For the date of the events narrated here, see at §81.*

[1] Neopatras (modern Hypate) was taken from the Latins by Theodore Komnenos in 1218 and remained under the authority of the Komneno-Doukai from that time: Nicol, *Despotate*, 57.

[2] John 'the Bastard' had surrendered to the *sebastokrator*, according to Akrop. at §81.13, 14.

[3] John Raoul was last mentioned at §77 as one of the men Michael sent to the west before he was made emperor.

[4] Arta and Ioannina were two of the most important towns under the control of the Komneno-Doukai from the time of Michael I: see above, §8, §10; Nicol, *Despotate*, 16–17. Neither had been challenged by Nicaean forces before this time. For the 'Pyrrenaia' mountains, see at §80.4.

[5] Akrop. was taken captive after Michael II's conquest of Prilep in 1257: see §72. From this passage it appears that he had been held at least part of the time at Arta, Michael II's capital. The fortress at Arta, in parts extant, was built by Michael II: see A. Orlandos, '*Τὸ κάστρον τῆς Ἄρτας*', *Ἀρχεῖον τῶν Βυζαντινῶν Μνημείων τῆς Ἑλλάδος* 2 (1936), 151–60. Skout. (545.20–3) omits this passage about Akrop.

[6] Michael VIII, in his typikon for St Demetrios, also refers to his plundering of Levadia and his attack on Thebes: ed. Grégoire, 455. These towns had been awarded to Otto de la Roche after the Latin conquest of Constantinople and formed part of the 'Duchy of Athens': see W. Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient* (Cambridge, 1921), 63–4; A. Bon, 'Forteresses mediévales de la Grèce centrale', *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 61 (1937), 187–91.

[7] The text here (Heis. 172.8: *Νικηφόρος καὶ ἡ σύζυγος τούτου*) indicates that Akrop. is referring to Nikephoros' wife, Maria, and not to Michael's. See §74.14.

[8] Akrop. is the only source for Michael II's actions at this time. The Ionian island of Leukas had been under the control of the Komneno-Doukai from

the time of Michael I. See Nicol, *Despotate*, 19, 23 n. 27. By the '[islands] of Kephallenia' Akrop. probably means Ithake, to the east of Kephallenia, and Zante (Zakynthos) to the south. Zante and Kephallenia were under the control of Matthew Orsini, son of Maio Orsini who had married Theodore Komnenos' sister. See Nicol, *Despotate*, 10, 17, 19, 107; N. Bees, 'Ein politisches Treubekenntnis', *BNJ* 3 (1922), 165–76; Magdalino, 'Between Romaniae: Thessaly and Epirus in the later Middle Ages', 87–110.

[9] Vouditza (Vonitza), on the Ambracian Gulf, was part of the Komneno-Doukai territories from the time of Michael I: see Nicol, *Despotate*, 19, 40, 102, n. 44. For the Slavic origin of the name vodiça, 'hook', see H. Grégoire, 'Deux etymologies: Vonditza—Vardar', *B* 22 (1953), 265–71, here 265–8; Apokaukos, ed. Vasilievsky, 'Epirotica', 249.2–4. Vouditza appears as Vonditza in other texts of the period. See A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, '*Συνοδικὰ γράμματα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου*', *Βυζαντίς* 1 (1909), 26; Skout. 546.3.

[10] Tornikes was not mentioned earlier as having been sent to the west against Michael II: see §77. His daughter was married to John Palaiologos while John was still *megas domestikos*, probably in 1258, before he left for the west. See Pach. I, 137.20–3; Schmalzbauer, 'Tornikioi', 118. For the *sebastokrator* Constantine Tornikes see also §57, §75, §82.11, §84, §85, §89.

[11] Pach. (I, 153.9–157.3) confirms Akrop.'s list of promotions but is fuller. See also Greg. I, 79.16–22.

[12] For the caesar Constantine Palaiologos, see above §77.15; for Constantine Tornikes, see §57.7. Eagles woven in gold thread are a distinguishing characteristic of the *sebastokrator*'s blue shoes, according to Ps.-Kod. (ed. Verpeaux, 148.3–5; 142, n. 3). How early this was the case is unknown. For woven cloth, see §43. 19.

[13] For the seal of the caesar Strategopoulos, see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I, no. 2756, pp 1577–9.

83. The emperor spent the winter in Lampsakos; when spring shone forth[1] he proceeded against the city of Constantine. For his every effort and whole aim was to rescue it from the hands of the Latins. He marched against Constantinople, placing confidence not in his troops (for he was not leading an army worthy of besieging such a city)[2] but beguiled by the words of his cousin whose name was Anselm.[3] For Anselm deceived the emperor saying that he had his home by the walls of the city and had control over the gates through which he would be able to lead the emperor's army into the city without a sound and without a battle. And he was believed when he said this; for their kinship provided the illusion that the man was telling the truth and Anselm had received promises, confirmed by oaths, of more honours and gifts*** of the Franks in the battle of the prince of Achaia; although

Anselm had expected bad things, he had got his share of many good things. When he made these promises to the emperor he received promises in return from him.[4]

Placing his hopes in these, then, as we said, the emperor proceeded against the city of Constantine and encamped on the far side of the Horn,[5] to the north of the city in a place called 'of Galatas'.[6] It appeared that he was attacking the fortress of Galatas but in truth he was sending for Anselm in secret that he might make good his promises. But Anselm looked to gain rather than the truth; he gave false replies, making a different excuse each time. Since a considerable length of time had passed and he was doing nothing, the army armed and went at night and approached his house—he had been notified that this would happen; it was then that he was openly caught lying. Since he had no reasonable excuse to make, he put the blame on the *archon* of the city.[7] He said,[8] 'The *archon* surmised that it was not good for me to have the keys to the gates of the city and so he took them for this reason, and that is why I am not able to achieve anything.' When the emperor plainly saw the man's deceit, he left the place. As he was on his way, the Latins sent three ambassadors to the emperor, seeking a truce. The emperor granted this for one year[9] and only one, restricting their affairs to narrow confines.

§83 *Akrop. gives an account of Michael Palaiologos' siege of Galata in the spring of 1260. His version of events differs considerably from Skout. (546.24–547.13), Pach. (I, 157–9; 169.1–13; 171.25–177.10), Holobolos (ed. Treu, 43–4), and Greg. (I, 80.2–81.12) who present the siege as a prolonged and serious attempt of Michael VIII against the Latins of Constantinople, undertaken with many men: see §83.1, 2, 9. In their accounts, also, the attack on Galata is part of a larger campaign which includes the previous conquest of Selymbria. Akrop. plays down Michael's efforts and failure at Galata, stating that the emperor had been let down by his cousin, Anselm. That all authors are referring to the same campaign is certain from the chronology, spring 1260: §83.1. The large difference in the accounts can be ascribed to Akrop.'s desire to give Michael VIII as much credit as possible. It may be too that Akrop.'s version makes reference to a small incident which was part of the larger and more ambitious campaign. On the sources for the siege see Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople', 33.*

[1] Skout. (546.24; 547.13) states that the emperor left Lampsakos for Constantinople in January and was still in the city in April. This chronology is confirmed by Holobolos: ed. Treu, 43.20–2. See Failler, 'Chronologie', 46–7.

[2] His army may not have been 'worthy of besieging such a city' but it was too large for an attack on the fortress of Galata: Pach. I, 173.3.

[3] This 'cousin' of Michael, taken prisoner with the prince of Achaia after the 'battle of Pelagonia', according to Skout. who fills in Akrop.'s text in this way (547.4–5), is thought to be either Anselm of Cahieu or Anselm of Toucy. The former fits Akrop.'s description of a relation of Michael; the latter, of a prisoner of the 'battle of Pelagonia'. Only Ephraim (9477) specifies that he was Anselm of Cahieu. Geanakoplos ('The battle of Pelagonia', app. B, 137–41) argues that the man was Anselm of Toucy because he was present at the battle of Pelagonia (see §81.16) but that Akrop. has confused him with Anselm of Cahieu who was a relative of Michael. For Anselm of Cahieu who married a daughter of the emperor Theodore I Laskaris, see above, §24.20. The identification of 'cousin Anselm' cannot be resolved.

[4] I have adopted Bases' proposal of *αὐτοῦ* in place of *αὐτόν* at Heis. 174.14: Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii. There is a lacuna in the text at Heis. 174.16.

[5] *τὸ κέρας*: the Golden Horn: Strabo, 7.6.2; Schol. Ap. Rh. 4.282.

[6] For the tower at Galata, thought to have been built in the sixth century, see Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 251–3; 457–8; A. M. Schneider, Is. Nomidis, *Galata, Topographisch-Archäologischer Plan* (Istanbul, 1944), 1–6.

[7] Skout. (547.15–17) understands the *archon* of the city to be Baldwin, the Latin emperor of Constantinople. For him, see below, §85.

[8] See Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii, for Praechter's suggestion which I have adopted for the placing of the quotation marks in this sentence.

[9] Pach. (I, 175.7–11) specifies that the emperor did not make a truce with the Latins so that he could leave the way open for another attempt on the city.

84. When the emperor had crossed the Hellespont, he arrived at the region of Pegai and dwelt there. Since the summer season had passed and autumn also, he left from those lands and arrived at Nymphaion, which was the customary place of relaxation of the emperors from the time when they were banished from the city of Constantine.[1] He sent me as an ambassador to the ruler of the Bulgarians, Constantine. I went to him and spent some days with him, for the feast days of Christ, His Birth and His Baptism, fell then. On the day of the Baptism the rulers of the Bulgarians hold particularly splendid celebrations and Constantine, the ruler of the Bulgarians at that time, wanted me also to be with them and to become a spectator of the rites.

When I had carried out my orders I left Trnovo[2] and went to the emperor who was staying at Nymphaion. There the emperor spent the winter and, when spring shone forth, he left Nymphaion, having already celebrated the illustrious day of the Lord's Resurrection in Nymphaion.[3] When he had passed some days in Phlebia, he went to a place which is actually called

Klyzomene and took up residence. For there also the emperors were accustomed to spend time upon leaving Nymphaion and to pass most of the spring season. The entire region is a plain and provides sufficient pasturage for many horses; it is also irrigated and has near it many villages and cities from which the necessities of life are abundantly supplied.[4]

While the emperor was there, the *sebastokrator* Tornikes[5] came from Nicaea and he troubled the emperor on account of Arsenios, who had previously been patriarch. For the patriarchal throne was bereft of an incumbent, since the patriarch Nikephoros, who had been transferred from the bishopric of Ephesos to the patriarchal throne, had left this world and departed for the eternal resting place, having honoured the patriarchal throne not even a full year.[6] Arsenios had been put forward for the patriarchal throne by the emperor Theodore. He was a dull man both in speech and in deed. He had no reason adorning him, neither that which comes from an education nor that produced by nature but, in addition, he had an unpleasant disposition and was obdurate in manner, quick in enmity, slow in friendship, and bearing ill will like a shadow following the body. At the beginning of the emperor's monarchy he went along with everyone with regard to what was done and was agreeably disposed to the emperor. But after he completed the coronation of the monarch he forthwith made an about-face and became disaffected to the emperor,[7] having as accomplices in this Andronikos of Sardis and Manuel of Thessalonike, who was also called Opsaras.[8] It was at the time when the emperor took up position against the city of Constantine and made his quarters near it that the metropolitan of Sardis was dressed in monks' robes by Ioannikios of Philadelphia. For he had often been a nuisance to the emperor about going to the land of the Paphlagonians;[9] it was from there that he came. But the emperor thoroughly recognized the man's cunning and did not allow him to go to those parts, since it was Andronikos' object to stir up all of Paphlagonia in disaffection to the emperor. The emperor quite rightly told him, 'You were ordained metropolitan of Sardis, not of Paphlagonia, and you must be content to live in the region of Sardis and stay there and tend your flock.' Therefore, when he realized that the imperial will was unchangeable, since there was nothing he could do, he chose the life of a monk.[10] The metropolitan of Thessalonike, Manuel, left Nicaea unwillingly and resided somewhere nearby.[11] The patriarch Arsenios also left there and lived in a small monastery, going into seclusion and making his resignation effective, although not in writing.[12]

As a result, all the bishops met at Lampsakos, and by the vote of all and by the emperor's order,[13] Nikephoros, the bishop of Ephesos, was elevated to the patriarchal throne. He was a most chaste and moderate man in speech and manner, pleasant to all who knew him.[14] But, just as I said previously, he did

not live even one year as patriarch before he left this world for God. Then the *sebastokrator* Tornikes (he was friendly with Arsenios, I do not know how) pressed the emperor to restore Arsenios to the patriarchal throne, describing some miracles and portents worked by Arsenios,[15] and this took place even though the others who were in a position to give advice did not want this to happen.[16] But the emperor's goodness and readiness to do good made him agree to the advice of the *sebastokrator*, and Arsenios was again elevated to the patriarchal throne, having stated in writing that he would think and act rightly with regard to the emperor.[17]

§84 *Akrop. briefly describes his embassy to the Bulgarian court in the winter of 1260–1 and goes back in time to events before the siege of Galata, to 1259, to the origins of the 'Arsenite schism', filling in the background to Arsenios' second patriarchate which began in 1261. Pach.'s version of the same events follows a more strictly chronological sequence. He shows how the trouble within the church provoked by Arsenios' departure from the patriarchate delayed Michael VIII's crossing of the Hellespont on his way to the recently conquered Selymbria (I, 159.1–4: 1259). Bar Hebraeus (trans. Budge, 428–9) likewise puts the election of Nikephoros in the context of Michael's attack on Constantinople. Akrop. himself gives a hint of the way in which the ecclesiastical troubles related to Michael's campaign when he says that Andronikos of Sardis went to see the emperor when the latter 'took up a position against the city of Constantine' (at §84.7). See Failler, 'Chronologie', 45–53.*

Akrop. presents Arsenios' departure from the patriarchate which provoked the 'Arsenite schism' in terms of personality: Arsenios' malevolent attitude towards the emperor Michael after his coronation was a manifestation of his 'unpleasant disposition'. See §88.2, also at §88.13. By making Arsenios' actions appear to be without reason, he simplifies the matter and also shows Michael in good light as the 'forgiver' (see §84.17). For the different accounts of Skout., Pach., and Arsenios, see below, §84.7, 8, 10–13, 17.

[1] This passage confirms that Nymphaion was the favoured place of winter residence for the emperors from the beginning of the Latin occupation of Constantinople, and not only from John III's reign. On this, see §41.2; Introduction, 87–8. In addition to the mild climate in that region, Nymphaion was close to the treasury, the mint and the agricultural heartland of the empire. See §84.3 for celebrations there; see §84.4 for the lie of the land.

[2] Akrop.'s embassy of December–January 1260–1 to Constantine Toichos (Tich), the ruler of Bulgaria since the death of Michael Asan in 1257, and husband of Theodore II's daughter, Eirene (§73, §74), is recorded also by Skout. (547.27–548.3) who adds significantly to Akrop.'s account. The reason

for the embassy is not mentioned. This was, however, Michael VIII's first embassy to the Bulgarian ruler since his accession to the throne; he may have been attempting to ensure the goodwill or, at least, the neutrality of that ruler. Relations with Constantine were particularly delicate since Eirene, his wife, was John IV's sister. Indeed, Pach. (I, 191.15–19) reports, in the context of events of 1261, that Eirene was indignant at the exclusion of her brother from his rights and was urging aggression against Michael VIII. For other embassies Michael VIII sent upon accession to the throne, see above §79, and N. Festa, 'Lettera inedita dell'imperatore Michele VIII Paleologo al pontefice Clemente IV', *Bessarione* 6 (1899–1900), 42–7, here at 48.64–8.

Akrop. refers to the festivities at the Bulgarian capital, Trnovo, in connection with Christmas and Epiphany, 6 January, and the day of Christ's Baptism: 'the rulers of the Bulgarians hold particularly splendid celebrations'. Along with Palm Sunday and Easter these were the major holy days in which the Byzantine emperor played a large role: see Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 220.8–221.2. He indicates indirectly that the Bulgarian court imitated Byzantine imperial ceremonial. But, in addition, Skout. makes it clear that it was on this occasion that the 'imperial standards' which the Bulgarians took as booty from the emperor Isaac in 1190/1 were exhibited in a triumphal procession: ed. Sathas, 547.31–548.2. On these objects, crowns, money and an imperial reliquary cross, see Akrop. above, §11.15, 16, 17. Akrop. nowhere refers to the fact that he saw these objects. On this see the Introduction, 45.

[3] Nymphaion was the site of ceremonial occasions and display because of the palace: §52, §53. The 'illustrious day of the Lord's Resurrection', Easter Sunday, fell on 24 April in 1261.

[4] Ahrweiler ('Smyrne', 72–3) locates Phlebia and Klyzomene in the plain of Nymphaion, irrigated by the Kryon river. Akrop. calls Klyzomene a 'region', from which Ahrweiler infers that it was the name of an area, not a town. Cf. Tomaschek, 'Zur historischen Topographie', 29, who identifies Klyzomene with Clazomenes (see also the critical app. at Heis. p. 176.14), a town. Akrop. uses the expression *τόπον οὕτω πως ἐπονομαζόμενον* to refer to Klyzomene, as he does in the case of Holkos (§30), Zichna (§43), and Valavisda (§44), and Siderokastron (§68.8). The phrase shows that he is making a distinction between the place name and the meaning of the word in Greek, in this case 'a place washed over by water'.

[5] For Constantine Tornikes, see §84.15.

[6] Nikephoros, bishop of Ephesos (1240/1–1259/60), was elected patriarch in the winter of 1259/60, after Arsenios' retreat and refusal to return to the patriarchal throne. See Pach. (I, 159–67) and Failler, 'Chronologie', 48–53, for the revised dates of Nikephoros' patriarchate. Akrop., Blem. (*Autobiographia* I, §68; Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 81–2 and nn 120, 122), and Pach. (I, 179.12–14) are complimentary about Nikephoros. However, the emperor

John III objected to his appointment as patriarch in the 1240s on the grounds that he was insupportable already as archdeacon (Pach. I, 165.18–23) and Theodore II complained of his avarice (*Epistulae*, 15–16; also 140–9). Pach. (I, 167.19–21; 179.6–8) twice refers to the riches Nikephoros brought from the metropolis of Ephesos when he became patriarch. As patriarch, Nikephoros II was rejected by those who believed Arsenios to be the rightful patriarch, since he had never resigned: Pach. I, 179.14–15; below §84.12. Seeking comfort and support, Nikephoros went to Selymbria in 1260 to be with the emperor Michael who was preparing the siege of Galata at that time: Pach. (I, 167.19–21; 179.6–8); Bar Hebraeus (trans. Budge, 428–9). He died shortly after his return to Nymphaion, late in 1260. See Pach. I, 179.10–15; Failler, 'Chronologie', 51–3.

[7] For Arsenios' election to the patriarchate in 1254, see above, §53. Here, as above, Akrop. makes deprecatory comments about his education. See the Introduction, 47–9. Akrop. dates Arsenios' change of attitude toward Michael to the time of the coronation. See §77.4. This conforms with Arsenios' own assessment of the coronation as a turning point in their relations: 'Testament', PG 140.953A. Akrop., however, attributes the cause of Arsenios' 'about-face' to his innate disposition, his 'ill will'. On this, see Skout. (548–9=*Additamenta*, 300–1). Pach. (I, 159.6–19) suggests that it was Michael's disregard for the rightful heir, John IV, which was the cause. Not only does Akrop. not refer to John IV again after Theodore's death (§75), he also repeatedly uses *autokrator* of Michael here ('the coronation of the monarch') and elsewhere (§79, §81, §82). His language indicates that he leaves no room for doubt of Michael's right to sole rule. Yet, according to Arsenios, Michael took oaths at every stage in his elevation to the throne, stipulating that John IV had 'first' position in coronation, honours and rank: 'Testament', PG 140.952–3.

[8] The men Akrop. calls Arsenios' 'accomplices' and Pach. refers to as 'schismatics' (I, 169.12–13) left their positions in the church after the election of Nikephoros II, ostensibly in support of the patriarch Arsenios, but in reality for the same reason he had left, Michael VIII's treatment of John IV. See Pach. I, 167.14–18. They had also been associated with Arsenios in dissent earlier, at the time of Michael Palaiologos' coronation. They had both refused to agree to the plan to crown Michael alone, an arrangement which violated the oaths protecting the rights of the legitimate heir, John IV: Pach. I, 143.20–147.4. Other previous connections exist between these churchmen. According to Skout. (511. 12–14) Andronikos of Sardis (on him, see also §84.10 below) had been sent on an embassy to pope Innocent IV together with Arsenios in the reign of John III but this information is contradicted by Pach. (II, 471.13–17 and n. 4), and the acts of the pope (Haluscynskyi and Wojnar, *Acta*, no. 28, p. 39) which state that the ambassadors were Andronikos of Sardis and

George Kleidas, metropolitan of Kyzikos. On the embassy to the pope, see Franchi, *La svolta politico-ecclesiastica*, 70–1 n. 94. Manuel of Thessalonike had written a letter to pope Alexander IV, as if from Arsenios, in 1256: Pieralli, 'Una lettera del patriarca Arsenios', 171–88; Laurent, *Regestes*, no. 1332, pp 137–9. For the context of the letter, see above §67.3. On Manuel, see also §84.11 below.

[9] See Wirth, 'Addenda', xxviii: *τῶν Παφλαγόνων*. In §84.8–12 Akrop. expands on his previous statement, giving background to the disaffection of Andronikos of Sardis, Manuel Disypatos and Arsenios.

[10] Pach. (I, 169.15–171.3; Failler, 'Chronologie', 53) also relates Andronikos' taking of monastic vows when Michael VIII was at Selymbria, before his attack on Galata, in the winter of 1260. Ioannikios of Philadelphia was officiating in the church of the Saviour in Selymbria where Andronikos became the monk Athanasios. In Pach.'s version, however, there is no mention of Paphlagonia. For Sardis, which flourished during the period of the Nicaean empire for the first time since the seventh century, see Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis*, 87–8.

[11] Manuel Disypatos, given the nickname Opsaras by his childhood friends because of his preference for fish (ms. G, critical app., Heis. p. 178), was metropolitan of Thessalonike at least from Theodore II's reign. It was at that time that he was credited with a prophecy that Michael Palaiologos would one day rule: Pach. I, 47.8–51.2. Also in Theodore II's reign, in 1256, he wrote a letter to pope Alexander IV on behalf of Arsenios (see §84.8). For the dates of his tenure of office, see also Laurent, 'La succession épiscopale de la métropole de Thessalonique dans la première moitié du XIII[e] siècle', 295–6. Pach. says that Manuel was already in exile when Andronikos of Sardis went to Selymbria. Akrop.'s statement that he left Nicaea 'unwillingly' is supported by Pach.'s 'he was sent into exile' (*ἐξωρίζετο*: I, 169.12–13).

[12] Before the election of Nikephoros II to the patriarchate, Arsenios was living in the monastery of St Diomedes whose location is not certain: Pach. I, 161.17; Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 89. Pach. (I, 161.6–163.24) gives a fuller account of the attempt to obtain a written statement of resignation from Arsenios who refused, although he confirmed that his decision to leave the patriarchate was irrevocable. See Failler, 'Chronologie', 64 n. 91.

[13] Pach.'s account agrees that the place of the election of Nikephoros was Lampsakos (I, 159.1–4; 167.5–11) but Bar Hebraeus (trans. Budge, 428) specifies Kallioupolis, as does Nikephoros' first synodal act: see Failler, 'Chronologie', 52–3.

[14] See above, §84.14, for Nikephoros.

[15] The '*sebastokrator* Tornikes' is Constantine Tornikes, one of the chief supporters of Michael Palaiologos (Pach. I, 107.23–8), who bestowed the title

of *sebastokrator* on him: §82; Pach. I, 153.12–16. For him see also §57, §75, §85, §89; Schmalzbauer, 'Die Tornikioi', 117–19. His daughter was married to Michael VIII's brother, John: §82. No other source refers to his support of, or friendship with, Arsenios nor to his part in reconciling the emperor and Arsenios. Akrop. expresses surprise at his friendship with Arsenios. However, ms. G (critical app., Heis. p. 180.15) whose text was written by a supporter of Arsenios, states that most members of the senate looked upon Arsenios as the true patriarch. Again no other source refers to 'miracles and portents worked by Arsenios' at this time, although the 'Logos' for Arsenios (457.217–22) makes mention of miracles he performed when he was a monk, before his elevation to the patriarchate under Theodore II.

[16] Akrop. is implicitly one of the 'others'.

[17] Pach.'s account casts doubt on Akrop.'s version of Arsenios' second elevation to the patriarchate. Michael VIII may have become reconciled to the return of Arsenios to the patriarchate at Klyzomene in the spring of 1261, as only Akrop. states, but Arsenios was not reinstated canonically by the synod until the summer and he did not return to Nicaea. Arsenios himself implies that he did not take up his duties immediately after he was recalled. He states that the emperor 'would sometimes say, "Should you not go to Nicaea since you were ordained (bishop) of Constantinople?" ' ('Testament': PG 140. 953C). Akrop. is the only source to say Arsenios signed a declaration. (Skout., 549.23–4, omits this statement.) Arsenios, on the contrary, says that he would not agree to the demands made of him, to accept John IV's demotion to that of a private person, with no acclamation, no imperial symbols (953B). See the discussion by Failler, 'Chronologie', 59–65, esp. 60 n. 74.

85. The emperor, having made arrangements, sent forth Alexios Strategopoulos, the caesar, to the western regions with some troops to join battle with the enemies of the Romans there.[1] He gave orders that as he was passing through—since the road which leads to that place is near the city of Constantine—he should make an assault against it and the army should run up to its very gates so that they might instil terror in the Latins inside. But it happened then that something occurred by the providence of God. A large Latin hollow ship from Venice arrived at the city of Constantine and there was a young potentate on it whom they call a podestà. He was, as became apparent, an energetic man and bold in matters of war, urging all Latins in Constantinople to go to battle and advising that, 'We should not only stay inside the city, guarding the city and ourselves, but we should also take some action against the Romans so that they will not be altogether contemptuous of us in their attacks on us.' He persuaded them, therefore, to embark on as

many triremes as they had and some other ships, such as *lembadia*[2] and dromons, and to proceed against the island of Daphnousia,[3] to see if they might be able somehow to bring it to terms and obtain a good share of its spoils. The city was therefore emptied of its men and it was administered and protected by women, children, and the man who supposedly ruled over it as emperor, Baldwin,[4] with a modest number of men.

Suddenly, then, the caesar Alexios Strategopoulos approached the city of Constantine at night. Since he had with him also some men who had come from the city and who had precise information about it,[5] he asked them and learned that there was an opening in the wall of the city through which an armed man could pass inside; he did not delay but set to work. A man passed through it and another followed him, and then another one, and so on up to 15 men, perhaps even more, entered the city in this manner. But since at the wall they found one of the men who had been entrusted with keeping watch, some of them climbed up, and taking him by the legs, hurled him out of the city. Others, taking hold of axes and breaking the bars on the gates,[6] made the entrance to the city free for the army. It was in this way that the caesar Strategopoulos and all the Romans and Scyths with him (for the army under him was composed of such men)[7] came within the city. The people inside were shaken by the suddenness of the event; everyone sought his salvation as best he could. Some went to the monasteries and were dressed in monks' garments in order to escape slaughter, while women cowered at the openings of the walls and hid in dark passageways and concealed places.[8] The ruler of the city, Baldwin, rushed to the Great Palace.[9]

The Latins who had gone to Daphnousia and the podestà with them, knowing nothing of what had happened, were returning to the city,[10] since they had not been able to accomplish anything against the island of Daphnousia—for God held them back. They got as far as the church of the Archgeneral of the Heavenly Forces, Michael, near Anaplous,[11] without learning anything at all of what had happened. But when they arrived there and learned this, they rushed to come to the city. However, the Roman army, aware of this, set fire to the houses of the Latins which were by the shore and burned them, first the houses of the Venetians, then those of the other races—they call them *campi*.[12] When the Latins saw the city in flames, striking their cheeks with their hands and taking as many people as they could into their triremes and other ships, they left,[13] while one trireme went to the Great Palace and took Baldwin[14] who had come close to being captured. And these things happened in this way, and by the providence of God the city of Constantine again became subject to the emperor of the Romans, in a just and fitting way, on the 25th of July,[15] in the fourth indiction, in the 6769th year [1261] since the creation of the world, after being held by the enemy for 58 years.

§85 *This account of the conquest of Constantinople from the Latins on 25 July 1261 is similar in broad lines with that of Pach. (I, 191–203) whose narrative provides much more circumstantial detail. Neither author gives an indication of the length of time the operation took but both state, along with Holobolos (ed. Treu, 66.29–32), that Strategopoulos was meant to pass by Constantinople only to frighten the Latins. Akrop. (see at §86.3), Pach. (I, 191.13) and Greg. (I, 83.10) affirm that the number of men sent with Strategopoulos was too small for an attack on the city. See Failler, 'Chronologie', 53–9; Geanakoplos,* Emperor Michael Palaeologus, *92–115.*

[1] Michael VIII sent two armies against the 'enemies of the Romans' in the 'western regions': one with the despot John, against Michael II, who was on the offensive because of his recent loss of territory, and one with the caesar against the Bulgarian tsar Constantine, who, stirred up by his wife Eirene, daughter of Theodore II, was protesting Michael VIII's disregard for the rightful heir John IV: Pach. I, 191.2–23. For the 'troops' Strategopoulos had with him, see below, §85.7.

[2] *Lembadion* is a diminutive of *lembos*, a small ship propelled by oars: Demetrakos, *Μέγα Λεξικόν*, V, s.v. *lembos*.

[3] Akrop. gives the Greek transliteration of the Latin *potestas*, podestà, the highest titled Venetian official in the Latin empire of Constantinople. See also Pach. I, 221.1. Marco Gradenigo was the last podestà (1259–61) of the Latin empire: see Wolff, 'The oath of the Venetian podestà', 539–73, esp. 557–8, 564. Of Greek authors, only Akrop. involves the podestà in the expedition to take the island of Daphnousia, a Nicaean possession (Greg. I, 85.5–8), in the Black Sea, off the Bithynian coast: see Ramsay, *Historical geography*, 182–3. Gradenigo's involvement is confirmed by western sources who likewise show him to be 'an energetic man and bold in matters of war': Sanudo, *Chroniques gréco-romanes*, ed. Hopf, 104; 114–15; Sanudo, 'Fragment of Torsello', ed. Hopf, 172; Wolff, 'Hopf's so-called "Fragmentum" of Marino Sanudo Torsello', 151. Cf. Pach. (I, 193.6–8), Holobolos (ed. Treu, 67.1–4). The absence of the fleet from Constantinople at this time was not mere coincidence but rather Michael VIII's doing, according to Bar Hebraeus (trans. Budge, 428–9). See Failler, 'Chronologie', 56, on this point.

According to Pach. (I, 193.6–7; 199.30–201.1), the entire Latin fleet, numbering 30 ships, was absent from the city. Akrop. refers to the ships as 'triremes', '*lembadia*' and 'dromons'. These are long-ships or galleys, and small vessels, all propelled by oars and distinguished from the 'hollow ships' (here and above at §2) which were round ships or freighters for transporting merchandise. See J. H. Pryor, *Geography, technology, and war. Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean 649–1571* (Cambridge, 1988), 58–61. See above, §2, §48.

[4] Here and above, §78.3, Akrop. expresses disdain for Baldwin's imperial pretensions in Constantinople with the word 'supposedly' (τάχα). He was the fourth and last Latin emperor at Constantinople, born in Constantinople and raised in that city. For him, see above, §27.2, §34, §37.2, §76.8; *PLP*, fasc. 2, no. 2070.

[5] 'Some men who had come from the city' can be identified with the 'volunteers' or θεληματάριοι whom Pach. discusses at greater length, former Byzantine subjects who lived inside Constantinople, cultivating the land outside the walls. The Nicaean forces had made contact with them earlier during the Galata campaign: Pach. I, 157.6–28. Pach. gives the 'volunteers' a much greater role than Akrop. does in helping the Nicaean soldiers enter the city. They climbed the wall by ladder, threw down the guards on top of the wall and opened the gate to the Nicaeans. Bar Hebraeus likewise makes mention of the 'volunteers' when he says that Michael 'flattered certain of the citizens, and one night they opened to him an old gate' (ed. Budge, 429). When Michael VIII later gave rewards to his men, he set aside lands both inside and outside the walls of Constantinople for the 'volunteers' 'on account of their zealous exertions and good-will' (Pach. I, 221.21–3). For the differing views on the 'volunteers' and the origin of their name, see Karayannopulos, '*Οἱ θεληματάριοι*', 159–73.

[6] Pach. (I, 195.20; 197.10–13) specifies the gate of the Fountain, τῆς Πηγῆς, known later as the Selymbria Gate: Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 275–6.

[7] Pach. (I, 191.13) confirms that there were Scyths or Cumans in his army and 'not many others'. Greg. (I, 87.3) specifies Bithynians and gives a figure of 800 men.

[8] Pach. (I, 203.6–10) refers in general terms to the terrible things which were done then, commenting that the Italians were paying for what they had once done to the Romans.

[9] Baldwin fled from the Blachernai palace, in the northwest part of the city, to the Great Palace, the Boukoleon, at the other end of the city, on the sea of Marmara: Pach. I, 199.12–16. Both palaces had been assigned to the Latin emperor by the treaty of March 1204: TTh I, 447; Vill. §234, §249, §263.

[10] Pach. (I, 199.25–201.4), on the contrary, says that it was news of the Nicaeans' entry into Constantinople which made the Latins return from Daphnousia.

[11] The church of the Archangel Michael at Anaplous on the European side of the Bosphoros was attributed to Constantine I from the fifth century. It was rebuilt by Justinian I: R. Janin, 'Les sanctuaires byzantins de saint Michel', *EO* 33 (1934), 37–42: Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 338–40. Skout. (508.24–509.4) includes this church in his list of buildings which John III is

said to have salvaged from destruction during the Latin occupation of Constantinople.

[12] The Venetians and the 'other races' had their houses along the southern shore of the Golden Horn. Alexios I granted living and trading quarters in Constantinople to the Venetians and similar privileges for the other Italian maritime cities followed. See Jacoby, 'The Venetian quarter of Constantinople from 1082 to 1261: topographical considerations', 153–70; Jacoby, 'The urban evolution of Latin Constantinople (1204–1261)', 277–97. '*Campi*' (*κάμπους*: Heis. p. 183.12) is a Greek transliteration of the Latin *campus*, *campos*, used in Latin documents in the thirteenth century to refer to the Latin merchants' quarters in Constantinople: see TTh II, 254, 255; Wolff, 'The oath of the Venetian podestà', 561 n. 3; Wolff, 'Politics in the Latin patriarchate', 270. Although the Latin word means a 'plain' or an 'open space' and was understood as such by the Byzantines (see C. Gastgeber and J. Diethard, '*Λέξεις ῥωμαϊκῆς διαλέκτου*. Ein byzantinisches Fremdwörterlexikon', *FM* 10 (1998), 451), this meaning is not particularly apt for the quarters of the Latins in Constantinople. For Akrop.'s knowledge of the Latins in Constantinople, see the Introduction, 7, 10, 38–9, 89. Pach. (I, 201.6–26) attributes the idea of setting fire to the homes of the Venetians and other foreigners in Constantinople to John Phylax, a Greek in the employ of the emperor Baldwin.

[13] Thirty long-ships had gone to Daphnousia. Pach. claims that among these the Sicilian ship was large enough to receive all those in the city (I, 199.30–201.3; 201.21–3). See Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus*, 113–14, for an estimate of the numbers involved.

[14] Baldwin left the city with the podestà and the Latin patriarch: Dandolo, 311.5–10; Sanudo, *Chroniques gréco-romanes*, ed. Hopf, 115; Sanudo, 'Fragment of Torsello', ed. Hopf, 172; ed. Wolff, 'Hopf's so-called "Fragmentum"', 151–2; Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, 429.

[15] On the feast day of St Anna: Pach. I, 203.26–7; 213.29–30; Schreiner, *Kleinchroniken* II, 200–1.

86. At that time the emperor was encamped near Meteorion;[1] suddenly a report assailed the ears of the people by night. The report came from a child servant of the emperor's sister Eirene—renamed Eulogia through taking the monastic habit—who came to her from the region of Bithynia; the servant had learned on the way[2] of the conquest of the city of Constantine by the Roman army. As quickly as she could, then, the emperor's sister went to the emperor; finding him asleep, she shook him gently with her hand in order to awaken him, prompting with a small voice, 'You have taken Constantinople, O emperor.' She said this more than once but the emperor stayed still, saying nothing at all to her. But when she changed her statement and said, 'Rise,

emperor, for Christ has conferred Constantinople upon you', he arose from bed and, stretching his hands to heaven, he said, 'This statement, O sister, I accept. The first words you said, that I had taken the city of Constantine, I can in no way accept. For how could I take possession of the city of Constantine from Meteorion? I did not even send a worthy army against it. But I agree that these things are easy for God and He is able quickly to grant to whomever he wishes that which is almost impossible.'[3]

Having said this he assembled all those in office who were with him there at that time and asked them if what had been conveyed by the report seemed true to them. Some men, especially those to whom the Latins' departure was made known in detail, held that it was true. But some, those to whom the knowledge of the decisions of Higher Providence has not been granted, doubted the report, considering the deed to be among the most difficult and not easily accomplished. Night-time passed in conversations of this sort. When day dawned, it was everyone's hope that a person conveying the truth would arrive at the camp, but that day passed too and no such person came. The spirits of all were distressed and troubled, especially the emperor's. But the following night the man who conveyed the happy message arrived[4] and spoke clearly about the matter, saying that the Roman army with the caesar Strategopoulos was staying in the city of Constantine, and he related how everything was.

§86 *Both Pach. (I, 205.14–207.6) and Holobolos (ed. Treu, 68.24–69.26) relate in detail how Michael VIII's sister, Eirene, conveyed the news of the conquest of Constantinople to him.*

[1] Meteorion, known only from this passage and §87, has been identified with Gördük Kale, overlooking the Lykos river, north of Thyateira: C. Foss, 'Sites and strongholds of northern Lydia', *Anatolian Studies* 37 (1987), 81–101, here 95–8.

[2] The sources do not indicate how long it took for the news to reach the emperor but, according to Pach. (I, 205.3–4), the report reached Nikomedeia by 27 July. In Pach.'s account, the bearer of the news to the emperor's party is not identified. Michael's sister, Eirene, renamed Eulogia as a nun, was married to John Kantakouzenos (see §48.5). Their daughter, Theodora, was married to George Mouzalon in the reign of Theodore II: Pach. I, 41.10–11, 155.2–4. Pach. (I, 181.10–12) says that it was Eirene (Eulogia), in particular, who advised the emperor her brother to deny John IV any claims to the imperial title. It is not known when she became the nun Eulogia. On Eirene–Eulogia, see Nicol, *Kantakouzenos*, no. 13, pp 14–16; no. 14, pp 16–18.

[3] For the ascription of victory to divine intervention, see also above at §36, §44; the Introduction, 54–5.

[4] In Akrop.'s account there is a delay of a couple of days before confirmation of the truth of the report. Pach. (I, 209.2–6) indicates a much more condensed sequence of events. However, as Akrop. appears to have been with the emperor (see §87.1), he may have a better sense of the timing of these events.

87. So the emperor left Meteorion greatly pleased since he was striving to reach the city of Constantine quickly, lest the Latins, returning from Daphnousia and entering the city, put up a strong battle against the Romans and, being by far greater in number than the Romans, put them outside the walls. But these things did not happen; shaken in their souls by the unexpected, they had already fled, as the narrative has just disclosed. The emperor speeded up the journey. When we had passed the mountains of Kalamos and the emperor had encamped near Achyraous,[1] it was then that the imperial insignia of Baldwin, who had supposedly ruled over the city of Constantine as emperor, were brought. These were a *kalyptra*, Latin in shape, decorated with pearls and with a red stone on top, red-dyed shoes and a sword sheathed in a red silk cover. It was then that people believed the statements,[2] for the magnitude of the deed had not allowed anyone to believe the reports easily.

The emperor hastened his movements. He made his progress from place to place faster and greater. As the emperor was approaching the city of Constantine, it occurred to him to make the entrance into the city of Constantine in a manner more reverential to God than imperial, and he considered the way it might take place, that is, through words of thanksgiving to God and prayers uttered on behalf of the emperor, the clergy, the city, its inhabitants and the whole population. Since he was seeking the person who would write the prayers, he wanted to spur the philosopher Blemmydes to the task. But the man was far away—he lived at Ephesos[3]—and the affair was going to be delayed. The emperor did not wish to put off his entry. He was displeased about this but I resolved the difficulty for the emperor. For I said, 'If, O emperor, you want the prayers to be by a holy man, may your wish be fulfilled. I have nothing to say. But if you should choose to have your will executed by anyone at all who is able to write, behold, I myself could satisfy your wish and write the prayers for you.' This seemed better to the emperor; he preferred to have prayers written by me for a quick entry. I therefore began the work immediately; a whole day and night had not quite passed before I had written 10 prayers plus three, each one with its own theme.[4]

§87 *These two sections (§87–8) are concerned with Michael Palaiologos' preparations for, and entry into, Constantinople on 15 August 1261. Pach. (I, 215.6–217.9) shows that before setting off for Constantinople, Michael sent messengers to the city, asking for the palaces to be prepared and regulating which properties his highest office-holders would receive. In his account, Michael arrived 'some days' before he made his entry (I, 217.9–10).*

Akrop. inserts himself into the narrative here, revealing that he was with the emperor on this journey to Constantinople, as were the other members of senate (see Holobolos, ed. Treu, 72.15–16; Pach. I, 217.7), and that he wrote the prayers which were part of the ceremonial entry. On Akrop.'s references to himself, see the Introduction, 44–6.

[1] Both Kalamos and Achyraous lie on the road to Constantinople from the Hermos and Kaikos river valleys. (For the location of Meteorion, see above, §86.1.) The village of Kalamos (modern Gelembe) was at the northernmost limit of the Neokastra theme (§15.15). Achyraous, north of Kalamos, overlooks a tributary of the Makestos river (§15.14).

[2] Pach. (I, 209.2–13) likewise says that it was the sight of Baldwin's headcovering and sword, as well as the letters describing the taking of the city, that convinced people. It was a late Roman custom to send booty to the emperor to serve, along with the letters, as proof of the victory. On this see McCormick, *Eternal victory*, 66, 67, 69, 191.

Pach. (I, 209.3) also uses the word *kalyptra* to refer to Baldwin's headcovering but only Akrop., who was with the emperor and therefore saw it, specifies that it was 'Latin in shape'. What shape this might be cannot be determined from Baldwin's seals which show him wearing the *stemma* and *loros*; see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine lead seals* I, no. 114, pl. 28, pp 102–4; G. Schlumberger, *La sigillographie de l'Orient latin* (Paris, 1943), 170–3; Hendy, *Catalogue* IV/2, 659. For crowns of Baldwin's western contemporaries, see E. F. Twining, *European regalia* (London, 1967), pls 10, 46. On the *kalyptra*, see also §88.6 and §11.15.

[3] Nikephoros Blemmydes, whom Akrop. calls the 'philosopher' because of his learning but also because of his monastic state, lived in his monastery at Emathia, near Ephesos, from c. 1249 until his death in c. 1269: see Munitiz, *A Partial Account*, 24, 28. He never returned to Constantinople, the place of his birth. Pach. II, 437.14–441.8. Akrop.'s statement that the emperor would 'spur' (Heis. p. 186.14: ἐπινύξαι) Blem. to the task rings true of Blem.'s character, as it emerges from his *Partial Account*. For Blem. see above also, §32.6, §39.6, §53.8.

[4] Hörandner, 'Court poetry: questions of motifs, structure and function', 83–4 and n. 34, suggests that σκοπός, which I have translated as 'theme', can also mean here metrical shape or melody. While it is possible that each prayer

had its own distinctive metrical form, there are several reasons why such an interpretation is unlikely. Akrop. uses the word again at §89 where it clearly means subject matter or theme. In addition, Holobolos specifies the subject matter of each prayer, but says nothing about the metrical variety of the prayers. In an oration addressed to Michael VIII in the mid-1260s, Holobolos lists the subject of each prayer and makes a reference to the author, 'a certain man who assisted with words the most wise thoughts (of the emperor)': ed. Treu, 73.24–74.2. Both Holobolos and Skout. (554.7–8) give the emperor the leading role in determining the themes of the prayers. These were prayers for: 1) the strength of emperors; 2) the orderliness of the people; 3) their obedience of the law; 4) the mildness of the seasons; 5) the abundance of food; 6) the banishment of all things that destroy: famine, earthquakes, fire, floods, winds; 7) good upbringing of the young; 8) a comfortable old age for the elderly; 9) prudent management; 10) an increase in justice; 11) the revival of courage; 12) the flowering of wisdom. Akrop. specifies 13 prayers, while Holobolos lists 12 prayers for the city. The 13th could have been in honour of the emperor Constantine, the 13th Apostle and founder of the city. The refounder of the city, Michael VIII, was officially called the 'New Constantine' at least from 1262. On the prayers see Macrides, 'The New Constantine and the New Constantinople', 36–7, esp. 23 n. 55 and 24 n. 58. Mercati ('Giambi', 289–90) tentatively identifies an anonymous poem whose opening words are 'the deed is Yours, not mine, O Logos of God', with one of the prayers Akrop. wrote. For the prayers, see also §88.

88. The monarch arrived at the city of Constantine; it was then the 14th of August. He did not want to enter Constantinople on that day; instead he encamped at the Kosmidion monastery which is near the Blachernai.[1] Having spent the night there, arising early, he completed the entrance into Constantinople in this manner. The patriarch Arsenios was not present, as he was a sluggish man with regard to good things and ill-disposed towards the emperor, and almost annoyed that the city of Constantine was added to the empire of the Romans by the emperor.[2] One of the bishops therefore had to pronounce the prayers out loud. The metropolitan of Kyzikos, George, who was also named Kleidas,[3] performed the service. Climbing up to one of the towers of the Golden Gate,[4] with the image of the Theotokos which is named after the monastery *ton Odegon*,[5] he recited the prayers in the hearing of all. The monarch took off his *kalyptra*[6] and, bending his knee, fell to the ground and all those with him who were behind him fell to their knees.When the first of the prayers had been recited and the deacon made the motion to rise up, all stood up and called out the 'Kyrie Eleeison'[7] 100 times. And when these were finished another prayer was pronounced by the bishop. What happened for

the first prayer happened in turn for the second and so on until the completion of all the prayers. When this holy ritual had taken place in this way, the emperor entered the Golden Gate in a manner more reverential to God than imperial; for he proceeded on foot, while the icon of the Mother of God preceded him.[8] He went as far as the Stoudios monastery,[9] and when he had left the icon of the immaculate Mother of God there, he mounted a horse and went to the shrine of the Wisdom of God.[10] There he paid reverence to the Lord Christ, and when he had given Him due thanks he arrived at the Great Palace.[11] On that occasion the Roman population was of good cheer and felt great gladness of heart and immense joy. There was no one who was not jumping for joy and exulting[12] and almost doubting the deed because of the unexpectedness of the event and the extreme pleasure.

Since it was necessary for the patriarch also to come into the city of Constantine, after the interval of a few days he made his entrance, after discussions and persuasion. The emperor went to the holy palace, the shrine of the Great Wisdom, in order to entrust the see to the bishop. And there assembled with the emperor all those in office and the most distinguished officials and all the people. Taking the hand of the patriarch, the emperor said, 'You have your throne, master. Enjoy now the see of which you have long been deprived.' It was in this way that the emperor's affairs turned out also with regard to the patriarch.[13]

§88 *The ceremonial entry is described by Pach. (I, 217.9–219.5) and Holobolos (ed. Treu, 72–7). The entry through the Golden Gate, along the Mese, to Hagia Sophia and the Great Palace, was a triumphal entry which put emphasis on the Mother of God, the patron of the city, rather than the emperor and his victorious general. The emperor honoured the patron saint of Constantinople, by choosing for his entry 15 August, the feast day of the Dormition of the Mother of God, and by giving the icon of the Hodegetria, the 'One who leads', first place. The Mother of God crowns Michael on gold coins minted between 1259 and 1261. For these see O. Iliescu, 'Le dernier hyperpère de l'empire byzantin de Nicée',* BSl *26 (1965), 94–9; Hendy,* Coinage and money, *261 and pl. 36.1. The Theotokos* orans *appears on coins minted after 1261, on top of, or surrounded by, the walls of the city: P. Grierson,* Byzantine coins *(Berkeley, 1982), p. 81, 1290, 1298. For the significance of Michael VIII's chosen form of entry into Constantinople, as an emperor proclaimed outside the walls of the city, see Puech, 'La refondation religieuse de Constantinople par Michel VIII Paléologue', 351–62; G. Dagron,* Empereur et prêtre *(Paris, 1996), 79–85.*

[1] The Blachernai is the district at the northern end of the city, in the angle made by the land walls and the Golden Horn. The Kosmidion monastery,

dedicated to saints Kosmas and Damian, was in the Kosmidion district outside the city walls on the Golden Horn (modern Eyüp district). See Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 57–8, 324, 461–2.

[2] See §84 for Arsenios' status at this time. In his Testament, Arsenios states that he was detained at Skoutari (modern Usküdar), on the Asiatic shore, and subjected to force. Demands were made on him by Michael Palaiologos to accept Nikephoros' appointment to the patriarchate as canonical, as well as those of the men he had ordained. If he did not, 'entrance to Constantinople was withheld': PG 140.953CD.

[3] Pach. (I, 217.18–20) and Holobolos (ed. Treu, 73.24) also state that Kleidas pronounced the prayers. George Kleidas was metropolitan of Kyzikos on the sea of Marmara at least from 1256 when he was present at a synodal meeting held at Nymphaion: MM I, 119: George of Kyzikos, *hypertimos* and exarch of the Hellespont. In 1253 he was sent by John III to pope Innocent IV, together with Andronikos of Sardis: Halyscynsky and Wojnar, *Acta*, 39; Pach. II, 471.16–17. See also *PLP*, fasc. *5*, no. 11 779.

[4] The Golden Gate, named 'gold' or 'golden' in an inscription of Theodosios II, at the southwest of the city, is flanked by two towers. See Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*, 269–72; T. Macridy and S. Casson, 'Excavations at the Golden Gate, Constantinople', *Archaeologia* 81 (1931), 63–84. See Robert of Clari's (§89) description of the gate and its function as a triumphal entry. Pach. (I, 179.24–181.6) relates the story that Michael, as a baby, could be lulled to sleep only when his sister told him that one day he would become emperor and enter Constantinople through the Golden Gate.

[5] For the monastery *τῶν Ὁδηγῶν*, near Hagia Sophia, between the sea walls and the Great Palace, see Angelidi and Papamastorakis, 'The veneration of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Hodegon monastery', 373–87. The monastery had associations with the Palaiologan family, through George Palaiologos, Michael VIII's great-grandfather. See Puech, 'La refondation religieuse de Constantinople par Michael VIII Paléologue', 361. The icon of the Theotokos, the Hodegetria, housed in the monastery, an object of special veneration (Ps.-Kod., ed. Verpeaux, 228.1–3; 231.1–12; R. Cormack, *Painting the soul* (London, 1997), 47–63) was the cause of a quarrel between the Latin patriarch and the Venetian podestà after 1204. The Venetians took the icon and kept it in the Pantokrator monastery where it stayed until 1261: TTh II, 45–7; R. L. Wolff, 'Footnote to an incident of the Latin occupation of Constantinople: the church and the icon of the Hodegetria', *Traditio* 6 (1948), 319–28. Pach. (I, 217.11–18) says that the emperor Michael had the icon brought to the Golden Gate from the Pantokrator. It had last been displayed on the city walls in 1187 to ward off a siege of the city by Alexios Branas: Chon. 381.46–382.61.

[6] On the *kalyptra*, a head-covering, see above, §87.7 and §11.15.

[7] The 'Lord have mercy', the people's response, completed the short petitions, the litanic prayers, in the processional stations. On this see J. F. Baldovin, *The urban character of Christian worship* (Rome, 1987), 223, 242.

[8] See Pach. I, 217.21–219.18; Holobolos, ed. Treu, 75.23–9. For Michael's imperial models in this ceremony, see Puech, 'La refondation religieuse de Constantinople par Michel VIII Paléologue', 358–9. A lead seal depicting Michael holding an icon of the Virgin and Child above his head is, according to Zacos and Veglery, a representation of Michael's procession into the city (*Byzantine lead seals* I, 3, no. 2756 *bis*). However, the icon in the seal shows the Virgin holding a medallion of Christ before her chest (*Nikopoios*) and not on her arm (*Hodegetria*).

[9] The Stoudios monastery was named after its fifth-century founder who built a church on his property and dedicated it to the Prodromos, St John the Baptist. It lies on the main road from the Golden Gate to the centre of the city. See Janin, *Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, 430–40.

[10] The Church of the Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia, was the cathedral of Constantinople. The present structure dates from the reign of Justinian I. See R. J. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia* (New York, 1988). See also below, §88.13.

[11] According to Pach. (I, 219.5–10), the emperor had to inhabit the Great Palace, to the southwest of Hagia Sophia, because the Blachernai palace was in need of cleaning, having been blackened by the smoke and soot of the Latins' cooking fires. It was in the Blachernai palace that Baldwin was at the time of the entry of the Nicaean troops: see above, §85.9. For the condition of the city in general, see Greg. I, 87.23–88.12: 'a plain of destruction, full of ruins and mounds'.

[12] Similar language is used at §78 to describe the joy of people upon Michael's accession to the throne.

[13] The date of Arsenios' arrival in Constantinople cannot be determined exactly, although the late autumn 1261 seems a likely time, since Arsenios' first acts as reinstated patriarch date to November (Laurent, *Regestes*, nos 1358–60, pp 162–5). Above, at §88.2, Akrop. blames Arsenios for his absence on 15 August and accuses him again of ill will towards the emperor. In this passage he smoothes over the long and difficult negotiations and the length of time these took, giving a purposely vague, 'after the interval of a few days'. The interval is more likely to have been months' long. Pach. shows how much had to be done before Arsenios was reinstated as patriarch (I, 229–31). He also describes the refurbishment of Hagia Sophia, carried out before Arsenios was formally received there (I, 233.6–15). See Failler, 'Chronologie', 64–5.

89. At that time there happened also the following which I considered unnecessary not to transmit in writing.[1] I had written an oration on the

subject of the deliverance of the city of Constantine. The theme[2] of the oration at the beginning was thanksgiving to God for His beneficence to the Romans and His compassionate solicitude and help, but there was mixed with the oration also a panegyric expressing thanks to the emperor. The request[3] at the end of the oration was for the emperor's first-born son, Andronikos[4] Komnenos, to be proclaimed together with the emperor his father.[5] This was unknown to most people, especially those in office who did not approve of the matter.[6] Our leading men, the despot John,[7] the emperor's brother, and his father-in-law, the *sebastokrator* Tornikes[8] (even though the caesar Strategopoulos[9] was present on this occasion, he did not care about these things), not knowing the theme of the oration and the request for the promotion, pressed the emperor to hear the oration. The emperor was annoyed,[10] for already the sun was casting its midday rays and the time for the midday meal was passing***[11]

§89 *The episode to which Akrop. alludes in this passage took place either on the day of Arsenios' arrival in Constantinople in the autumn of 1261 (see §88.13), or at a later date before Michael VIII's coronation in Hagia Sophia which took place before 25 December 1261: §89.5. The oration Akrop. delivered on this occasion has not survived. He claims here that, unlike most of the office-holders, he was in favour of the elevation of Michael's son Andronikos to imperial power. However, in the event, Andronikos was not proclaimed in 1261 but at some later time, by 1265. On this see Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople', 13–41, esp. 37–8; Failler, 'La proclamation impériale de Michel VIII et d'Andronic II', 237–51, esp. 246–7. It seems, therefore, that although Akrop. did deliver the oration (§89.11) it did not succeed in its 'request'.*

1 Akrop. expresses himself awkwardly and indirectly in this sentence.

2 For the meaning of the word *σκοπός*, see §87.4.

3 For encomia which end with a request or petition (*ἀξίωσις*), see R. Macrides, 'The ritual of petition', in D. Yatromanolakis and P. Roilos, ed., *Greek Ritual Poetics* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), 356–70. On *ἀξίωσις* as a 'request', see Pach. II, 517.27 and H. Lausberg, *Handbook of literary rhetoric* (Leiden, 1998), s.v. *προοίμιον*.

4 Andronikos, named after his paternal grandfather, was not yet three years old in August 1261. Manuel, Michael's eldest son, had died by 1261, thus making Andronikos his 'first-born'. See Pach. I, 247.14–17.

5 Akrop. is referring to what would be Michael VIII's second coronation, an event which took place sometime before 25 December 1261: Pach. I, 255.24–257.6; Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople', 17–18. For the earlier proclamation and coronation at Nicaea, see Holobolos, ed. Treu,

92.26–32; also §77. On Akrop.'s use of 'proclamation' to mean coronation, see the Introduction, 52 and n. 325.

[6] Pach. (I, 141.24–9) states that when Michael Palaiologos was crowned at Nicaea most people were not ignorant of what it was leading to. He mentions men 'in office' specifically. See the Introduction, 71–5, on the differences between Akrop. and Pach.

[7] On him see also §77, §80, §81, §82.

[8] For Tornikes, see also §75, §82, §84, §85.

[9] Alexios Strategopoulos, the commander of the troops which took Constantinople in July 1261, was honoured by the emperor after his coronation in Hagia Sophia. The caesar was given a triumph and had his name mentioned after the emperor and the patriarch in the list of those to be commemorated during the liturgy: Pach. I, 233.26–8; Holobolos, ed. Treu, 94.14–27; Greg. I, 89.10–13; Macrides, 'The new Constantine and the new Constantinople', 38–9.

[10] Akrop. gives an insight into the circumstances in which his oration was delivered: the emperor might not have attended had he not been 'pressed'. The text does not state or imply, however, that the emperor actually walked out and went off to dinner. For this interpretation, see Dennis, 'Imperial panegyric', 134.

[11] The narrative breaks off in mid-sentence. The manuscript Skout. used for his work seems to have been likewise incomplete because he also ends his chronicle at this point adding, however, that Akrop.'s oration was delivered: *ἀνέγνω* (555.17–24). It is not known whether he inferred that this was the case or whether he was present or had the information from someone who was. See the Introduction, 31–4, for a discussion of the scope of the *History.*

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